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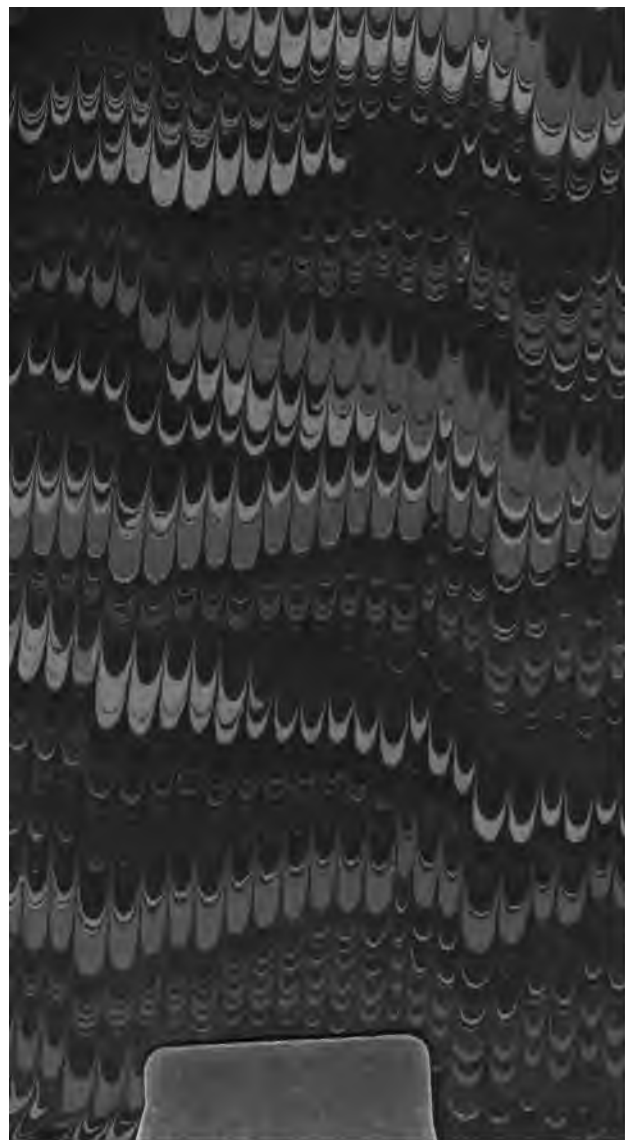
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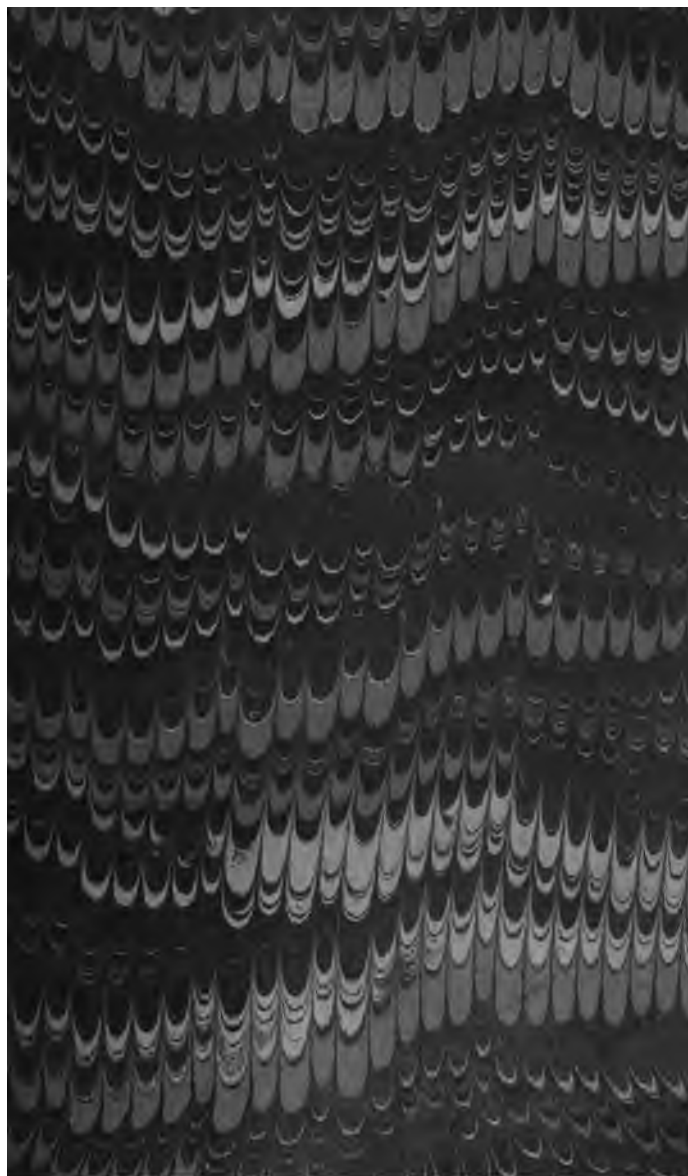
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**SHORT
MEDITATIONS**

FOR

EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR.

**EDITED BY
WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, D.D.,
VICAR OF LEEDS.**

New Edition.

**Vol. III.—Fourth Sunday after Easter to
Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.**

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RICHARD SLOCOMBE.**

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SHORT MEDITATIONS,

ETC.

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

EVERY GOOD GIFT AND EVERY PERFECT GIFT IS FROM ABOVE.


St. James, i. 17

GIVE me, O LORD, what Thou pleasest, since Thyself hast taught me a more perfect lesson, to submit my will entirely to Thine; only I beg that in all my ways Thy providence may govern me, and in all my temptations Thy grace may preserve me. *Amen.*

First, then, O my soul, remember there was a time when thou wert not; and that thou once didst begin to be, is the free gift of God. Thy

very being is an instance of His bounty ; but thy being is not the only instance of His bounty to thee. Thou art fearfully and wonderfully made, — a beautiful and glorious creature, only a little lower than the angels, endued with the image of God, made after His likeness. O my soul, how deeply art thou indebted to Him, from Whom thou hast received much when yet thou hadst nothing of thy own, and, having nothing, couldest not requite Him, except by loving Him Who gavest thee all thou hast. He has given thee all things out of love, therefore thou canst but love in return. But now thou must consider another and more amazing scene of kindness. Thy Lord and Maker, Whose majesty shone so gloriously in thy creation, was pleased to condescend to thy regeneration. In the former He appeared so high and noble, in the latter so little and so humble, that it is not easy to determine which of the two is most worthy of wonder and praise.

In the former His power was illustrious, Who conferred such glorious privileges upon thee ; in the latter His mercy was no less illustrious, Who submitted to endure such bitter things for thee. He took upon Himself, He



endured, He vanquished, He restored; He came down from the throne of God to wretched mortals—He took upon Himself mortality; He endured affliction, and pain, and ignominy; He vanquished death; He restored mankind.

Stand still, my soul, and with a holy awe gaze on the series of wonders revealed to thee! He made thee beautiful at first, but thou didst deform and sully thyself by sin; notwithstanding this dishonour done to the image conferred upon thee by Him, thy stains are washed away, and thy former purity restored by His marvellous compassion. Thus was His love the sole cause both of the gift at first, and of its restitution.

Thus does the Church turn our attention at this time to the gifts purchased by God for man. Our LORD teaches His disciples to expect that great gift for which He led captivity captive. The Spirit, even the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, is promised; and great and glorious are the effects to be expected from His descent upon earth. Therefore let us meditate upon God's great goodness, unmerited and unsought as it has been by us. Let us raise our minds to the contemplation of what the life of God's

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servants should be, who, having received the gift of the Spirit, desire to bring forth the fruits thereof in all virtue and godliness of living.

We are not our own, but the temples of the HOLY GHOST; let us dedicate ourselves entirely to the service of God, and bring all our faculties, and our will, and our understanding, and our whole soul, into subservience to His blessed will.

Monday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

OF HIS OWN WILL BEGAT HE US WITH THE WORD OF TRUTH.
St. James, i. 18.

GIVE, me O LORD, what Thou pleasest, since Thyself hast taught me a more perfect lesson, to submit my will entirely to Thine ; only I beg that in all my ways Thy providence may govern me, and in all my temptations Thy grace may preserve me. *Amen.*

The Almighty hand of God, at all times and in all seasons the same, created all the living creatures upon earth, all the angels in heaven, and these He pronounced in their turn all "very good."

Man He created in His own image, and He breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul. But this perfect image man defiled by sin ; the sin-scarred image, it is

true, remained, but the likeness was gone, and man was given up to work evil continually. Thus did he forfeit his inheritance, the gates of heaven were shut against him, he was counted dead before God, and all his doings tended to lead him downwards to hell.

But God had pity upon the work of His own hands, and He determined to raise those, who were dead in trespasses and sins, to newness of life through the Gospel. For this purpose God the Word came down from heaven, and by investing Himself with our nature, going through all the hardships and penalties of this mortal life, and finally by forfeiting His life as a malefactor, He appeased the divine vengeance. He conquered the great enemy, death; and He brought us into a new life in His gospel. To His children and servants, so reclaimed from death and hell, He promised the gift of His life-giving Spirit, Which was to enable them to walk in all the commandments which He had left them, blameless. So, blessed be God, we are born again, made heirs of salvation, and have His image restored to us. We have again the inheritance of the sons of God. O that I may walk worthy of this high calling: may I

never disgrace the title which my dearest Saviour has purchased for me at so enormous a cost !

Lay this seriously to heart, O my soul, how entirely thou art indebted to thy God and Saviour. Thou owest thyself to Him, for He is thy Creator ; thou owest thyself to Him, He is thy Redeemer ; thou hangest entirely upon Him for support, and it is His free and unmerited mercy which bestows upon thee His sanctifying grace.

Behold my heart, gracious LORD ! Thou seest how weak and impotent it is in its endeavours to serve Thee properly. Admit me into the secrets of Thy love ; I ask, I seek, I knock ; O grant my requests, open to my opportunity ! O dearest Saviour, cast not out my soul ; it faints, it hungers for Thee ; make me Thine now, and be Thou mine hereafter, Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest One God, world without end. *Amen.*

Tuesday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

WHEREFORE, MY BELOVED BRETHREN, LET EVERY MAN
BE SWIFT TO HEAR, SLOW TO SPEAK, SLOW TO WRATH.
St. James, i. 19.

GIVE me, O LORD, what Thou pleasest, since Thyself hast taught me a more perfect lesson, to submit my will entirely to Thine; only I beg that in all my ways Thy providence may govern me, and in all my temptations Thy grace may preserve me. *Amen.*

I wish I were more constantly mindful of this injunction of the Apostle. Alas! in it I see the very contrary of my ordinary practice. If I were indeed deeply sensible of the low estate into which I have fallen by sin; if I were sincerely desirous of raising myself from my degraded and miserable condition; if I were longing to be more fit to be a child of

God, to get nearer to Him, to be more constantly in His presence; how should I watch for every opportunity of instruction; how should I look out around me for every token of divine teaching, whether it be conveyed by the lips of men or by the mute teaching of inanimate nature! How silently and seriously should I weigh every word, and, instead of critically examining its beauty or its justice, should take it home to me, and gather from it nourishment for my soul! How eagerly does the child listen to the instructive tale related to it; how earnestly and implicitly does it rely on, and reverently believe, all the wonders which are for the first time poured into its ear, when it is told of the great God Who formed the heavens and the earth, and Who created man from the dust of the ground! In such a simple and childish spirit ought I to be swift to hear, and so reverently ought I to hearken to the voice of the teacher. Alas! my soul, thou art not in this respect as thou oughtest to be; thou art too fond of examining and cavilling at the instructions which are offered thee: cultivate a different spirit, and be from henceforth "swift to hear."

But, with this swiftness of the ears, there is to be joined a slowness of the tongue, a considerate use of speech; so as to make it, not an instrument of levity and vanity, but a means of instruction and edification.

Volubility of tongue is, in every respect, a great snare; it scatters, and dissipates feelings which, if kept in and turned to thoughts, would nourish and breed up in us a strength of purpose, a definite motive for action, to which those who are ever exhausting themselves by conversation cannot attain. Volubility may also be a defect in prayer and in all our addresses to God. "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in heaven and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few." O my soul, how little does this awful thought enter thy mind, when, day after day, thou prayest unto the great and terrible LORD God! How canst thou, worm as thou art, venture to lift up thy voice to the Most High? True, thou hast an Intercessor, even CHRIST JESUS our LORD; and He obtains that God will listen to thy petitions. But even with the all-merciful JESUS representing His merits in-

stead of thy sins, thou canst dare but to utter the most devout, the most considered, the most careful words, for to God in heaven they are addressed; and darest thou utter quickly, and without thought, whole sentences, which perhaps are not the generous outpourings of the heart, but formal petitions not suited to thy state? O LORD, the great and dreadful God, for all my inconsiderate words, for all the prayers I have said with the lips and have not considered in my heart, for all my drowsy prayers, my formal prayers, I beseech Thee to pardon me; and grant, LORD, that henceforth I may have such devotion, such recollectedness in my prayers, that, though the words be few, they may be heard in heaven, Thy dwelling place, and be answered according to Thy all-seeing, all-knowing wisdom.

Wednesday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

WHEREFORE LAY APART ALL FILTHINESS AND SUPERFLUITY
OF NAUGHTINESS, AND RECEIVE WITH MEEKNESS THE
ENGRAFTED WORD, WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR
SOULS.—St. James, i. 21.

GIVE me, O LORD, what Thou pleasest,
since Thyself hast taught me a more perfect
lesson, to submit my will entirely to Thine;
only I beg that in all my ways Thy providence
may govern me, and in all my temptations Thy
grace may preserve me. *Amen.*

To struggle against and to subdue all the
evil tendencies and corrupt desires of the flesh,
is the first duty of those who are entering upon
the Christian course. These temptations are
at first the strongest, and although they gradu-
ally become weaker, yet it is a very high degree
of holiness that he has attained, who has con-
quered them altogether.

Wednesday after Fourth Sunday. 13

Let me now consider the temptations to which I am liable, the proper way of resisting, and the surest and swiftest path by which to reach the engrafted Word.

The first enemy which assaults our virtue is our own flesh; and the assaults upon it are those perpetual lustings against the Spirit, which every one experiences in his own breast. This is an enemy from which there is no running away. It is a domestic foe, an internal war, and consequently a struggle of infinite hazard and difficulty. Thou canst not, O my soul, dispossess or drive him from thy quarters; the condition of thy nature has tied him to thee, and thou must carry him with thee wherever thou goest. Consider then the constant presence of the enemy which thou canst not drive out, and determine to watch against thyself.

But there is another enemy which makes constant attacks, and compasses us about on every side, the world. Through our senses does this great and rampant foe make his advances, and wounds me with his darts; and so death comes up into my windows, and enters into my palaces.

The third enemy is that old serpent, more

subtle than all the beasts of the field. His advances are sometimes open, sometimes secret; in whatever way he thinks to gain the more sure advantage, that way he chooses. His malice and cruelty are always the same, and the end he drives at by all means is our mischief and eternal ruin.

Who then can put away all superfluity of naughtiness, seeing we are encompassed by these enemies?

No one, by his own strength; but through the LORD it is that we do all great acts, and His Holy Spirit assisting us, we are enabled to subdue and crucify the flesh and all the affections and lusts thereof. He protects us from this present evil world, and mortifies us to all its vanities; He breaks the serpent's head, and beats down Satan under our feet; and He will send us the word of life, which is able to make us wise unto salvation.

The struggles which thou must undergo to subdue the flesh will break down all the strongholds of thy pride, O my soul, and then wilt thou be prepared to receive the word of life with meekness; and when thou hast secure possession of that only good, thou wilt be en-

Wednesday after Fourth Sunday. 15

abled to go on thy way rejoicing. Think not to escape many troubles and many dangers; the flesh will still exist. But thy chief trouble will be in the innumerable small moral evils which thou wilt discover within thee; every thought will have some stain upon it, and thou wilt discern sin in all thy doings. O wretched man that I am, how am I to be free from these evils? I thank God, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD, Who has shewed us the way of salvation. I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. O tarry thou the LORD's leisure; be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart, and put thou thy trust in the LORD.

Thursday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

BUT BECAUSE I HAVE SAID THESE THINGS UNTO YOU, SORROW HATH FILLED YOUR HEART. — St. John, xvi. 6.

GIVE me, O LORD, what thou pleasest, since Thyself hast taught me a more perfect lesson, to submit my will entirely to Thine ; only I beg that in all my ways Thy providence may govern me, and in all my temptations Thy grace may preserve me. *Amen.*

This discourse of our LORD's to His disciples before He suffered is selected by the Church for our consideration now, because in it the promise is conveyed that the Comforter should be sent after our LORD's Ascension ; and we are now drawing towards the time when we shall celebrate that glorious Ascension, and also the coming of the HOLY GHOST.

The disciples listened with earnest and eager

attention to this divine and most elevating discourse; but when they heard their LORD say that He was going to leave them, sorrow did indeed fill their hearts, for they perceived both from the surrounding events, and also from the temper of men's minds, that something fearful was going to happen; they doubted, as well they might, their strength of mind to bear the trials which were awaiting them. They remembered all the various predictions which their LORD had delivered of His trials, and of His death; and they dreaded to be left without His gracious aid, and to be deprived of His miracles, His discourses, and the strengthening help which His presence ever afforded them; for He had predicted such troubles for them as they knew they had not strength to support. Therefore sorrow filled their hearts, and therefore did our LORD graciously shew them that it was for their good that he should go from them, and that when He had gone to Him that sent Him, He would send the Comforter to them. And now pause, O my soul: here is comfort and instruction for thee. The dispensations of God's providence are sometimes grievous unto thee, and sorrow

fills thy heart: thou art left apparently alone, and thou art no longer sensible of the presence of thy Saviour; He seems to have left thee; sorrow and bitter tears are thy only portion, and thou art tempted to give thyself up in despair. When thou art thus suffering, bethink thee of thy Saviour's words; He never afflicts but for thy profit; He whispers to thee it is "expedient for thee that I go away." Lift up thy heart, and hang upon thy LORD's most precious promises: when He leaves thee it is but to send thee more abundant comfort; when thou art left in sorrow and suffering, when the affairs of the world go wrong, when thy best loved ones go astray, or drop into the grave, leaving thee desolate and alone, remember thy LORD, pray earnestly that thy faith fail thee not: thou mayst weep, for God intends human feelings to have their way; but thou must not despair, but bend under the chastening, as sent by the hand of a loving Father. It has never happened but that such patient watching for the LORD has had its reward. The Comforter has been sent, and, in the midst of trouble and anguish, rivers of God's mercies have been turned into the dry and barren land, the wilder-

ness has blossomed as a rose, and there have arisen water-springs of faith and hope and joy, where the wastings of sorrow had created a dry and barren ground.

O LORD, how gracious art Thou in Thy dealings with the children of men ! Thy heavenly grace is shed abroad among Thy own children, and enables them to struggle with all their trials and sorrows. To Thy Church Thou hast bequeathed the inestimable gift of the Spirit ; in its ordinances I shall find that rest and peace which the presence of Thy Spirit alone can bestow. O let me ever abide in communion with that holy society to which Thou hast given Thy life-giving Spirit, and to which Thou hast promised Thy perpetual presence.

Friday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

AND I SAID, O THAT I HAD WINGS LIKE A DOVE! FOR
THEN WOULD I FLY AWAY, AND BE AT
REST.—Psalm lv. 6.

GIVE me, O LORD, what Thou pleasest, since Thyself hast taught me a more perfect lesson, to submit my will entirely to Thine; only I beg that in all my ways Thy providence may govern me, and in all my temptations Thy grace may preserve me. *Amen.*

What a wearisome life is this! sin and sorrow compass me about; though at times some drops of heavenly consolation revive my soul, yet how often is my heart heavy with many sorrows, and my head drooping with the weight of cares!

LORD, Thou hast told me of the blessed rest which remaineth for the people of God; Thou

hast drawn me to look up to it, to pant after it; had my soul wings to fly to Thy bosom, how quickly would I pierce the skies! When shall it be, dear Lord, that my weary soul shall find in Thee repose? Hide me in the cleft of the rock in Thy bleeding side; may my sinful soul now find a safe retreat. Give me the wings of faith, that I may fly to this relief from the pursuit of divine justice and a consuming law; and when the burden of this my mortality shall be shaken off, and my imprisoned spirit disentangled from the clay, then let the wings of love direct my flight to the heaven where Thou art. Yea, LORD, I would be with Thee; I am Thine by every tie; Thine by creation, by providence, by redemption, by grace, by every obligation of love; I am Thine by repeated surrenders of myself unto Thee; wholly Thine I am ever bound to be; yet how have I taken from Thee what was Thine! how often have I faithlessly dishonoured Thee, and broken the vows made in Thy holy Name; how, like a broken bow, have I started aside; and still, LORD, how prone is my heart to wander from Thee! How shall I render to Thee Thine own? Save me, O LORD! it must be Thine Own work;

without Thee I can do nothing to please Thee ; save me from myself, from my sins, from my corruptions, from my weakness. O visit me with Thy salvation ! If Thou set my heart at liberty, then shall I go in the paths of Thy commandments : they are righteous, just, and good, and in them I delight after the inner man. O that my ways were made so direct that I might walk in them for ever ! O that I could do Thy will on earth as it is done in heaven !

Prepare me, gracious LORD, for Thy service above, by admitting me to partake frequently of Thy uncloying dainties here below, so may I walk in Thy fear and love all the days of my life ; and when Thou art pleased to take me to Thyself, let me shelter close by Thy once wounded side ; there let me bid eternal adieu to sin and sorrow.

Be patient, my soul, yet a little while ; hope unto the end ; for He that is faithful and true hath said, " I will give thee rest."

Saturday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

WHOM HAVE I IN HEAVEN BUT THEE ? AND THERE IS
NONE UPON EARTH THAT I DESIRE BESIDE
THEE. — Psalm lxxiii. 25.

GIVE me, O LORD, what Thou pleasest, since Thyself hast taught me a more perfect lesson, to submit my will entirely to Thine; only I beg that in all my ways Thy providence may govern me, and in all my temptations Thy grace may preserve me. *Amen.*

LORD, what is heaven but Thy presence and favour? what is hell but Thy absence and displeasure? The glory of Thy sanctuary is Thy blessed Self; Thou art the light and sun of Thy heavenly mansions; without Thee they would be desolate: Thou art there; and there to bless Thy people with the enjoyment of Thyself. When shall I see Thee face to face?

When shall my hour come to awake up after Thy likeness, and to behold the transforming glory of Thy countenance? O LORD, my soul longeth for Thee, and to be where Thou art, and as Thou art! O my LORD, my God, my King, Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever; if Thou art mine, (and that Thou art, Thy promises give me the most reviving assurance,) if Thou art mine, what can I ask or wish besides? LORD, Thou art all-sufficient. While I live here on earth, though I am too distant from Thee, Thou shalt still be my joy and hope. What rival can steal my affections from Thee; what earthly object can intrude between me and the LORD of my salvation? LORD, there is nothing upon earth that I desire in comparison with Thee; both honour and pleasure tempt me away, but what can they give me in exchange for Thee? are they not lighter than vanity itself. Think then, O my soul, when thou art inclined to listen to the enticements of the world, think of thy better portion, think of that part thou hast deliberately chosen, and sit at His feet Who alone is worthy to be thy Master; live on Him Who alone is able to fill the void within thee,

and Who, from the never-failing streams of His grace, which flow from the fountain whence proceeds all true comfort, will replenish thee day by day, till from the stream thou arrivest at the fountain head, and shalt receive the fullness of thy desires, when thou wilt for ever dwell with God, and God with thee.

O LORD, grant that I may in deed and in truth surrender my whole heart to Thee, as Thou hast given me all Thine. Let me go out of myself that I may enter into Thee: let me cleanse my heart, and empty it of the world, that Thou mayest fill it with thy heavenly gifts. O JESU ! the rest of my heart, the sabbath of my soul, lead me into the rest of a blessed eternity where there are pleasures at Thy right hand for evermore !

Fifth Sunday after Easter.

ASK, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE, THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE
FULL.— St. John, xvi. 24.

O LORD, from Whom all good things do come; grant to us, Thy humble servants, that by Thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by Thy merciful guiding may perform the same; through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

What shall I render unto the LORD for all His benefits? This is another of His great mercies, that through Him we have boldness and access to the throne of grace. O LORD, how great are Thy mercies! Thou hast taken upon Thee our nature; Thou hast taken the form of a servant; Thou wast afflicted and tormented; Thou didst become obedient unto death; and all, because man was sinful, and Thou wast full of compassion, and wouldest

free him from the guilt and burden of his sins. And now Thou art gone up on high, Thou sittest at the right hand of God, and there Thou makest continual intercession for us; and Thou hast obtained for our feeble prayers a hearing before the Almighty Majesty of God.

“Ask, and ye shall receive.” O gracious Saviour, what a promise is this! in Thy Name, and for Thy sake, my petitions will be heard and answered. O may I never misuse or abuse this blessed privilege! may I ever remember the awful nature of those addresses which I make daily with so much unconcern. Let me remember that when I pray, if my heart goes not with my understanding, my choicest expressions will be but as the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal. Let me, by diligent self-examination, arouse my soul to a sense of its necessities; and then let my prayers be the genuine outpourings of an earnest and devoted heart, intent upon gaining the benefits to which it aspires, and upon expressing the love and adoration which it feels towards its blessed Lord, its adorable Creator, and its merciful Father. Let me remember, with

grateful heart, the many instances in which our LORD has fulfilled this His promise to His disciples, towards me. When an answer is given to prayer, what an awful feeling arises in the heart ! how does it swell under the realization of the ever acknowledged fact that God is near ! These may be few, and well remembered, and striking instances ; but, my soul, thy prayers are always heard, and they are surely always answered ; not, perhaps, according to the tenor of the petition, but according to the wisdom, and knowledge, and infinite mercy of God.

With this fact before thee, never leave off beseeching thy God that, through the merits of His dear Son, He will grant unto thee all things necessary both for body and soul ; He will hear thee ; and thinkest thou not thy joy will be full ? Yea, if only thou persevere, and art instant in season and out of season ; if thou art faithful and loving, and truly a disciple of thy LORD, He will indeed give thee thy heart's desire, and fill up the measure of thy joy in His eternal kingdom. O Thou, most high and most holy LORD God, look down in mercy upon me, a poor sinner, desiring to draw near the throne of grace in the Name of my incar-

nate Saviour, and making mention of His righteousness only.

O THOU LORD of life and glory, come and take possession of my heart; take the purchase of Thy blood; set up within me Thy kingdom; and turn Thou me, and so shall I be turned. O LORD, I desire to thank Thee with all the powers of my mind, with all the ardour of my spirit, for the great benefits Thou hast bestowed upon me; they are more than I am able to express: but among them there is one which I desire now to thank Thee for, — giving me access to the throne of grace. O precious gift! O mercy inconceivable! I may, through the merits and mediation of my Saviour, approach my Father, Which is in heaven, and I may say unto Him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight; I am no more worthy to be called Thy son; make me as one of Thy hired servants!”

Is it possible that I am heard, that I am answered? Does He deign to take me by the hand, and to kill for me the fatted calf, and to put on me the best robe, and to give a ring for my finger? O joy unutterable, inconceivable! Truly I was dead in trespasses and sins, but I

am alive again through JESUS CHRIST, my LORD; truly I was lost, and degraded, and miserable; I am found, a member of CHRIST, a child of God, an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven!

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Monday

AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

I CAME FORTH FROM THE FATHER, AND AM COME INTO THE
WORLD : AGAIN, I LEAVE THE WORLD, AND GO
TO THE FATHER.— St. John, xvi. 28.

O LORD, from Whom all good things do
come ; grant to us, Thy humble servants,
that by Thy holy inspiration we may think
those things that be good, and by Thy merciful
guiding may perform the same ; through our
LORD JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

I read in Holy Scripture, that “when the
fulness of time was come, God sent forth His
Son.” By saying that God sent Him, is meant,
that the Person thus sent came into the world
when He condescended to be born of the Virgin
Mary, and made His appearance in our flesh a
true and perfect Man. But what means the
passage of the Evangelist, “He was in the

world, and the world was made by Him?" The sense must be that He was sent hither with regard to His humanity, but was really here before all along (as He still is) with respect to His divinity.

This mission I believe and thankfully acknowledge to have been the work of the blessed Trinity. But, O Holy Father, how great was Thy love, and how tender the Almighty Creator's concern for His poor creatures, Who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up freely for us, and, which is more astonishing, while we were yet sinners! That Son became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross; He took the hand-writing which was against us and nailed it to His Cross; thus crucifying sin and slaying death. He only was free when in the regions of death and captivity, because He only had power to lay down His life, and power to take it up again for us. He, therefore, was the victor and the victim — the victor, because the victim. He was the priest and the sacrifice — the true high priest, because the perfect and sufficient sacrifice to our God.

Great, therefore, and most high, were the

hopes which our blessed LORD infused into His disciples in the words, "I came forth from My Father;" perhaps they understood them not then, but afterwards; and to this day our joy is made full, and our hopes are firm, for we know that they are founded upon this further fact, even upon "His sitting at the right hand of God, and ever living to make intercession for us." He has now left us, and is gone to His Father, and there sits at His right hand; this His session of intercession is indeed a most happy and most merciful thing for me; for though I have been washed in His blood, and cleansed from my defilements by His grace, yet I still feel that stubborn human will asserting its claims in me, and the prince of this world has much in me; but I apply to my LORD for help, and cry unto the God of my salvation.

O Thou, Who didst no sin, neither was guile found in Thy mouth, justify me, I beseech Thee; do Thou, the holy and spotless Head, convey health and salvation to Thy weak polluted members. Deliver me, I beseech Thee, from my sinful habits, my evil dispositions, my faults of wilfulness, of negligence, and ignorance. Fill me with Thy grace, and help me

to excel, and to resemble Thee, the perfection of goodness. Keep me steadfast in the ways of Thy commandments, and enable me to grow and persevere in virtue unto the end, that I may live and die according to Thy blessed will.

Tuesday

AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

BEHOLD, THE HOUR COMETH, YEA, IS NOW COME, THAT YE SHALL BE SCATTERED, EVERY MAN TO HIS OWN, AND SHALL LEAVE ME ALONE: AND YET I AM NOT ALONE, BECAUSE THE FATHER IS WITH ME. — St. John, xvi. 32.

O LORD, from Whom all good things do come; grant to us, Thy humble servants, that by Thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by Thy merciful guiding may perform the same; through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

When the disciples heard our LORD declare whence He came, and whither He went, they expressed their satisfaction in the knowledge He had given them, and their belief in Him.

In answer to this burst of enthusiasm and faith, our LORD put a warning question, "Do ye now believe?" and then foretells to them

what their conduct would be at a very early period, when their faith would be put to a severe test, and would fail them. And He also implies that as regards Himself their conduct would have no effect, because He had support they could not see; but to themselves their utter want of this boasted faith and love would be a sore trial and severe humiliation. And thus it is with me; at least I may take the words of my blessed Saviour as a warning that such may be my case, unless I watch and pray that I enter not into temptation. During such seasons as Lent and Easter, when I am more brought, as it were, into daily intercourse with my Saviour, and when, for purposes of improvement and devotion, I slacken some of my worldly cares and avocations, I feel that my love and faith towards my adored Redeemer grow warmer and firmer, and I am tempted to exclaim, LORD, I will go with Thee to prison and to death; but, perhaps, when I am again in the world, and talking, like Peter, with the people, and warming myself, as it were, by the fire of this world's enjoyments and pleasures, my love may wax cold; and when a great temptation comes, I may, like the apostles,

forsake my LORD, and leave Him alone. To our LORD Himself the desertion of one so weak, so unworthy, can be of no importance, excepting that He loves His own, and grieves over His sheep that go astray; but to myself such want of faith and courage is a falling away, which I shall never be able to get over; the stain of such a sin cannot be entirely effaced. Let me consider, then, how to stand ready for any trial with which God may see fit to test my faith. In these days, when minds are unsettled, and differences of opinion arise on the most vital points; and when scoffers and busy workers deride at any show or appearance of faith, and dependance upon an all-ruling, all-merciful God; it is very necessary to stand fast in the faith, to be very firm on the essential points of doctrine and practice, and to set the face as a flint against any attempt to laugh us out of serious views and religious notions. It is very hard to bear ridicule, but still it must be borne, unless we are content to forsake our blessed Master, and "to leave Him alone."

Resolve, O my soul, to fix thyself thoroughly in thy faith: be rooted and grounded in love to thy divine Master, and neither turn to the

right hand nor to the left. When thy principles are called in question, or thy faith turned to ridicule, it may be a good exercise of thy patience to stand and meekly bear the scorn and taunts which are flung at thee; but if thou art called upon to defend the truth, do so with temper and calmness and moderation never forgetting Whose thou art and Whom thou servest, keeping thy heavenly Master's example always before thee. He, when it concerned the honour of His Father's house, made a whip of small cords, and drove the profane out of the temple: but when *He* was reviled He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hairs.

Wednesday

AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

IN THE WORLD YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION : BUT BE
OF GOOD CHEER ; I HAVE OVERCOME THE
WORLD. — St. John, xvi. 33.

O LORD, from Whom all good things do come ; grant to us, Thy humble servants, that by Thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by Thy merciful guiding may perform the same ; through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

These words are a happy preparation for the festival which I commemorate to-morrow ; they remind me that while I am in this life I must suffer, and that, in some way or other, I shall find trouble, care, anxiety, and sorrow ; but, says our blessed Saviour, “ be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” It is upon such high festivals that I feel the full force of these

words: I may then for the time cast aside all worldly cares, and dwell for a few brief blessed times near to my LORD, in sweet communion, in high and holy meditation, and in prayer: I then can feel and know what "Be of good cheer" means; and a peaceful serenity dwells within, which no external circumstance can disturb. But to bring the soul into a state fit to celebrate a high festival, there must be previous preparation; the human will must be subdued by mortification and prayer to God's will; for how can even an hour be spent in communion with Him, unless the mind is brought into conformity and likeness to His will and His mind? Let me, therefore, on this, the eve of the festival of our LORD's Ascension, prepare to look up with the disciples, and behold the LORD vanish from sight, and then return with great joy to praise and bless and worship Him.

Let me think of His miraculous incarnation and holy nativity, whereby He took flesh of the substance of His mother, for us and for our salvation, that, as He had been before and from all eternity very God of God, so He might be in time very Man of man.

Let me think of all the privations, and toils, and grief, and pain, that He underwent during the whole course of His life: He was in all points tempted as we are, yet He was without sin, and has left us an example of perfect holiness, meekness, and endurance. Let me render to Him glory and praise for His passion and crucifixion, for all that bitter agony which He underwent, and all the cruel tortures He endured; and now I may render to Him praise and glory for His triumphant Ascension into heaven, and His session in our nature at the right hand of the Majesty on high. On the fortieth day after His rising from the dead, He went up in the sight of His disciples far above all heavens; and from that throne, according to His most true promise, did He shower down the Holy Spirit most plentifully upon the sons of adoption. O blessed, for ever blessed, be that astonishing and unspeakable goodness, which so tenderly loved wretches so unworthy of Thy love, and saved the world by Thy only, Thy best beloved Son! No instance of mercy can compare with this, no expression of it can be carried higher than that thou shouldst so love the world as to give Thy only-begotten

Son, that all who believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life: and this is life everlasting, to know Thee the only God, and JESUS CHRIST Whom Thou hast sent. By this knowledge I shall overcome. O LORD, give me this knowledge, this faith; and grant that, having overcome all my enemies that are in this world, I may ascend and dwell with Thee in those everlasting mansions where Thou livest for ever, having conquered sin and death, and trampled all Thine enemies under Thy feet.



The Ascension Day.

LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O YE GATES, AND BE YE LIFT UP, YE EVERLASTING DOORS : AND THE KING OF GLORY SHALL COME IN. WHO IS THE KING OF GLORY : EVEN THE LORD OF HOSTS, HE IS THE KING OF GLORY.— Psalm xxiv. 9, 10.

LIVE, glorious JESUS, and reign for ever eternal King of heaven and earth ! May all the blessed above perpetually adore Thee ; and all Thy servants here continually praise Thee ; and every tongue confess that Thou, O LORD, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Thou wert obedient to death, even the death of the Cross ; wherefore God hath exalted Thee, and given Thee a Name above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things on earth, and things under the earth. Alleluja !

Our dearest LORD has now sojourned forty days on earth since His resurrection ; His work

is complete ; and He is to return to the bright and glorious heaven, which He left to accomplish that which He has so triumphantly performed.

The LORD is again with those chosen disciples of whose faith and love, from the various tests and trials they had undergone, He was quite assured. He has finished admonishing them, and behold He leads them forth : the very road which they once traversed to witness the depth of His humiliation, they now again pursue, to see the height of His glory ; through the gate, over the brook, up the steep sides of Olivet they proceed ! O what a well-known way : how familiar is the very sound to my ears ! He leads them forward to Bethany ; and when they arrive at the same well-known spot, He turns, He lifts His blessed wounded hands in the act of conferring His benediction. Behold Him, my soul, He loves them unto the end ! His arms are spread, and it seems as if, during the act of that solemn benediction, the human will, which fastened His feet to earth, having done its work, is dissolved ; and a Divine Will operating from heaven drew Him up : gradually He was parted from His loving, adoring followers ; and a cloud, it might be a legion of

mighty angels, removed Him from their sight! His loving providence sends two angels to comfort the bereaved brethren, and to assure them that as they had seen their LORD ascend, so would He one day again in like manner descend to earth.

They then fell down and adored their ascended LORD, bending over and kissing the spot on which so lately His feet had rested, and returned to Jerusalem with joy; for they knew that the God Whom they worshipped was in very truth the LORD, the King of glory. O dearest LORD, Thou art gone from us, Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; the everlasting doors have been rolled back, and the brilliant train of countless angels, the mighty cherubim, and the six-winged seraphim went forth to meet Thee and welcome Thee back to Thy own heavenly abode. They met Thee in mid air, and they chanted as they went, "Who is the King of glory? the LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory."

Welcome, bright King, into Thy heavenly mansions: welcome, Thou great Conqueror over sin, and hell, and death: welcome, Thou great King over all the earth!

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanks giving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever !

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength and honour, and glory, and blessing !

And wilt Thou return in like manner, O my Saviour? Yea, so it is written. Thou didst ascend in private and in quiet, in Thy own meek and gentle humanity ; Thou wilt descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel with the trump of God ; Thou wilt descend in terrible majesty as the avenging Judge ! therefore pray Thee, help Thy servant whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy most precious blood. O Thou that art the Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end, give unto me, who am athirst for Thee, to drink of the fountain of the water of life freely. Grant that I may overcome in this my warfare, and be Thou to me a God, and I will be Thy son. Even so come, LORD JESUS ! *Amen.*

Friday

AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

LORD, WHO SHALL DWELL IN THY TABERNACLE : OR WHO
SHALL REST UPON THY HOLY HILL ?— Psalm xv. 1.

THOU art ascended, our glorious Redeemer, to prepare a place for us, yet continuest still here, our gracious Immanuel, to prepare us for it. Thy delight, O LORD, is to be with the children of men ; O make it ours to be with the GOD of heaven !

To Thee, O blessed LORD, do the pure and lowly in heart, to Thee the souls of the righteous, to thee the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, sing hymns of joy perpetually ; they fall down before Thy throne, cast their crowns at Thy feet, and, with profound reverence, adore the brightness of Thy majesty. Not only these, but man — a chief part of creation, since formed in Thy image, and placed chief in honour of all things here below — he joins in

praises also, though not able to discharge the exalted duty with the same noble and elevated zeal as the bright hosts of heaven. Even I, the last and least of men, laden with sin and frailty, do yet desire to magnify Thee worthily, and love Thee perfectly. Help me, my God, my Life, my Strength; assist my desires, and make me capable of glorifying Thee; shed abroad Thy light in my heart; put Thy Word in my mouth, that my heart may be filled with Thy praise, and my tongue may sing of Thy glory and honour all the day long.

But in regard, praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner, and I, alas! am one of unclean lips, purge me, I beseech Thee, from all manner of impurity; touch my heart and my tongue with a coal from Thine altar; wash me, purify me: so shall I be fit to offer Thee the sacrifice of praise.

O Eternal Truth, my only stay and hope, my soul panteth after Thee day and night; on Thee all my hopes are fixed. He that knows Thee, knows truth and eternity; for Thou art seated on high above all, Whom, when this life of dimness is dispersed, and the veil of mortal flesh drawn aside, we shall see as Thou art. O Thou, Who art seated on high, at the right

hand of the Father, draw me after Thee; Thou art my only hope, the only true object of my love; O take my heart and mind unto Thee in Thy glorious place in heaven, and there let them be ever with Thee. Enable me, by the powerful influence of Thy blessed Spirit, to continue steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity; that so, by a true faith bringing forth fruits of good works, Thy mercy may at last bring me to the attainment of everlasting salvation; that I may be where Thou art, and see Thee as Thou art, and adore the brightness of Thy majesty, and join my heart and voice with those whom Thou hast already admitted to that glorious sight, in hymns of joy and praise, saying with all the company of heaven, Glory to the FATHER, Whose wisdom created us; Glory to the SON, Whose love redeemed us; Glory to the HOLY SPIRIT, Whose graces sanctified us; Glory to the Almighty and Undivided TRINITY, Whose works are inseparable, and dominion without end. To Thee belong praise, and thanksgiving, and honour, and blessing; and therefore all honour, and power, and thanks, and praise, be unto Thee, our God, for ever and ever!

Saturday

AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

LIKE AS THE HART DESIRETH THE WATER BROOKS : SO
LONGETH MY SOUL AFTER THEE, O GOD.
Psalm xlii. 1.

THOU art ascended, our glorious Redeemer,
to prepare a place for us, yet continuest
still here, our gracious Immanuel, to prepare us
for it. Thy delight, O LORD, is to be with the
children of men; O make it ours to be with
the GOD of heaven !

Our LORD is ascended; no longer is He upon
earth. Go up, my soul, and endeavour by thy
earnest meditations to place Thyself with Him,
although the body must still remain below.

O Fountain of living water, when shall I ap-
proach Thee? when shall I have travelled
through this dry and desolate wilderness, in
which there is no way, that my soul may be

satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy mercy? Behold, O LORD, I thirst: Thou art the well of life; O quench Thou my thirst: yea, after the living God do I thirst; O suffer me to drink of Thy pleasures, and hasten that day of praise and thanksgiving, that day which Thou O LORD, hast made, that Thy servants may rejoice and be glad in it. O glorious day, O everlasting morning, whose sun never declines, in which I shall hear that most transporting sentence, "Enter thou into the joy of thy LORD,"—into that joy where are things great and unsearchable, yea, marvellous things without number. A joy without conclusion, without interruption, without alloy; where we shall meet with all we can wish, and rest secure from all we fear; free from the enemy's assaults, from the tempter's seducing insinuations; full of security, rest, and peace; blessed with the ravishing vision of God: such is the joy of thy LORD, thy God.

How long, O LORD, wilt Thou say, Wait, wait patiently? O LORD, what do I wish, what do I wait for? Surely it is for Thee, my Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, Who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto His

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glorious Body. Come quickly, LORD, and do not tarry ; come, LORD JESUS, and visit us in peace and favour ; come, and unlock our prison doors, that Thy released may rejoice before Thee with a perfect heart.

But the more I reflect upon and admire the happiness of those who are exalted to this secure and happy state already, the more cause have I to bewail my own misery, who am still exposed to the storms of a tempestuous and troubled sea ; for, alas ! I can only hope the best, and can be in no way secure of attaining the port of life and salvation. But, oh ! Thou stay of my soul, my refuge and strength, steer, I beseech Thee, this floating vessel with the helm of Thy Cross, lest the deep swallow me up. I am of Thy redeemed, and as such I cry unto Thee. Hear me, O God of my salvation, Thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea. Thou standest upon the shore and seest my dangers ; O save me, for Thy Name's sake, and so direct my course that I may escape the perils that beset me on every side. Save, Master, or we perish. Such is our state in this life : but Thou bringest us to the haven where we would

be, and then we are safe from all harm ; there Thou art, O LORD, the true and only Light, in Whose light we shall see light. To see Thy face, O my LORD, is to know the power, the wisdom, the clemency of GOD — the holy, blessed, and glorious TRINITY. To see Thee, the living GOD, is the most exalted happiness, the honour and reward of blessed spirits, the crown of glory and eternal bliss, the beauty of peace, the paradise of GOD, the heavenly Jerusalem, and that fulness of joy which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into man's heart to conceive.

Sunday

AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

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FOR OUR CONVERSATION IS IN HEAVEN; FROM WHENCE ALSO
WE LOOK FOR THE SAVIOUR, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.
Philippians, iii. 20.

O GOD the King of glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son JESUS CHRIST with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; We beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine HOLY GHOST to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour CHRIST is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O heavenly Jerusalem, our common Mother, the Holy City of God, my soul longs for thee, and all my faculties are stretched to comprehend thy delights. O what graces, what glory, what noble state appears in every part of thee !

most exquisite is thy form, and thou alone art beauty without blemish. Rejoice, and dance for joy, O daughter of Zion, for thy King Himself, fairer than all the sons of men, hath pleasure in thy beauty. How happy wilt thou be, O my soul, when thou art admitted to see the glory and the beauty of this fair place; to view the gates, and the walls, the streets, the stately buildings, the splendour of its inhabitants, and the triumphant pomp of its King enthroned in the midst of it! Its walls are of precious stones, and its gates of pearls; the streets are of pure gold, continually resounding with loud hallelujahs; its houses are founded upon huge square stones carried up with sapphire, covered in with gold; no unclean person can enter therein, no pollution may abide within its borders. Sweet and charming are thy delights, O Holy Mother of us all! subject to none of those vicissitudes and interruptions which abate our pleasure here below. No successions of night and day, no intervals of darkness, no difference of seasons in their different courses.

Nor is the light derived from artificial helps or natural luminaries, such as ours. No lamps

or candles, no sun or moon or stars, but God of God, and Light of Light, even the Sun of Righteousness shines in thee; and the white immaculate Lamb, He it is that enlightens thee with the full lustre of His majesty and glory. Thy light and glory and all thine happiness is the incessant contemplation of this divine King; for this King of kings is in the midst of thee, and all His host ministering round about Him continually.

There are the choir of angels, there the sweet fellowship and company of the heavenly inhabitants, there the joyful company of those sainted souls who, from their trials and travels through the vale of tears, at last return victorious to their native country. There are the goodly fellowship of Prophets, whose eyes God opened to behold far distant mysteries. There are the twelve leaders of the Christian army, the Holy Apostles; there the noble army of martyrs, the confessors; there that blessed array of pure and undefiled souls, singing that holy song which none but themselves can learn, and who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These all rejoice in their proper mansions; and though each differ from other in

degree of glory, yet all agree in bliss and joy diffused to all in common, and the happiness of every one is esteemed each man's own. For there charity reigns in perfection, because God is all in all, Whom all continually beholding admire and praise and love, without intermission and without end.

O how happy shall I be if, when this body crumbles into dust, I shall be entertained with that celestial harmony, and hear the hymns of praise which legions of angels and saints innumerable are ever singing in full concert. How happy if I may with them raise my feeble voice, and pay the same tribute to my God and Saviour, the Author and Captain of my salvation; to behold His face in glory, and be made a partaker of those gracious promises of which He hath given me the comfortable hope, by saying to His Father, "I will that they whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may see the glory I had with Thee before the world was." And again, supporting His disciples against the tribulations they should meet here below: "If any man serve Me let him follow Me, and where I am there also shall My servant be."

Monday

AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL: AND ALL THAT IS WITHIN ME, BLESS HIS HOLY NAME. BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL, AND FORGET NOT ALL HIS BENEFITS.—Psalm ciii. 1, 2.

O GOD the King of glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son JESUS CHRIST with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; We beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine HOLY GHOST to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour CHRIST is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

When I think of my LORD and Saviour, sitting at the right hand of the FATHER, in the glory and surpassing majesty of heaven; and when I think of His having condescended to visit us on earth, in order to redeem us from

the dominion of sin and the curse of the law ; I am utterly confounded to think of the disproportion between His merits and mercy, and my deserts. O gracious LORD, how does my heart burn within me when I think of Thy love towards man ! to think of Thy condition upon earth, of Thy glory in heaven ! Here Thou wert poor, and had not where to lay Thy head ; Thou wert despised, and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; Thou wert often in hunger and thirst, in painful and long journies ; Thou wert abused and insulted, Thy back torn with scourges, Thy face defiled with spitting, Thy ears pierced with slanders and revilings ; Thou didst suffer the death of a malefactor, and wert then called, "That deceiver !" In heaven, how altered is the picture ! O Thy condescension, Thy love, Thy meekness ! Thou art seated at the right hand of God, in the place of highest honour in heaven ; mighty cherubim and seraphim attend upon Thy state ; holy and beautiful creatures are occupied in incessant adoration of Thy divine perfections ; and Thou art Thyself the fountain and effulgence of light and life.

O let us magnify that great God Whom

angels praise, Whom dominions adore, Whom powers fall down and tremble before, Whose excellent glory cherubim and seraphim proclaim in loud incessant voices. Let us bear a part in this heavenly song, and, together with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, laud and magnify that glorious Name. Let us raise our voices with theirs; and though we cannot reach the excellence of their melody, yet will we exert our utmost skill and power in this tribute to our LORD, and say with them, "Holy, holy, holy, LORD GOD of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; glory be to Thee, O LORD most High."

These happy spirits, who offer the sacrifice of pure praise before the throne of God continually, who are ever rapt in the contemplation of His perfections, see them not like us, "through a glass darkly," but "face to face." What tongue can express, what thought conceive, the admirable beauty, the exact order, the numberless multitude of the heavenly host; the inexhaustible joy springing from the beatific Vision; the fervent love which ministers delight; the blessedness which comes down to them by their inseparable union to the Fountain of all

bliss; the light communicated to them from the Source of light; the happy change into an immutable nature by seeing the immutable God as He is, and being transformed into the likeness of Him they see? O LORD, I am indeed a man of unclean lips; I cannot touch such high and holy subjects without seeming to defile them by the unfitness of my words. O Thou, Who dwellest for ever in heaven, grant to me such perseverance, such unalterable desire of attaining to Thy heavenly kingdom, that living here with heart and mind fixed on things above, I may finally rise with Thee, and rest with Thee, and enjoy Thee, and see Thee as Thou art there, where Thou now sittest interceding for Thy poor weak creatures.

Tuesday

AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

BUT THE END OF ALL THINGS IS AT HAND: BE YE
THEREFORE SOBER, AND WATCH UNTO
PRAYER. — 1 St. Peter, iv. 7.

O GOD the King of glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son JESUS CHRIST with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine HOLY GHOST to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour CHRIST is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

I have now considered and celebrated the festival of our LORD's Ascension; I have meditated on the happiness of heaven, and on the joys He is preparing for those who love Him. I must now join another consideration to my

tations on my LORD, that of the coming
e HOLY GHOST.

ur LORD is in heaven; He sends gifts unto
even the gifts and graces of His Holy
t: I am on earth, and I must dispose my-
to the due preparation for receiving these
ous gifts. The end of all things is at

. How truly may I say this, when every
hews the uncertainty of human life! The
on who was yesterday in health and spirits,
ing his vocation, is to-day struggling with
; to-morrow, the end of all things will
come upon him. I am in health now,
true, but why am I spared? Why should
; be among those who perish in the casu-
; which daily occur? Why does the arrow
h flieth by day, and the pestilence which
oyeth in the noon-day, spare me? Even
live to three score years and ten, it will
but a very short time; and then, the end
things is at hand. Be sober then, O my

keep thyself in that quiet, subdued, re-
sted, watchful state, which is especially
nated as "sobriety." The gifts of the
t are not bestowed upon giddy votaries of
ure, who seek amusement as their only

good; but they are sent to those who keep their bodies in sanctification and honour, fit temples for the HOLY GHOST to dwell in. Thou must, therefore, pray much, pray earnestly; thou must watch unto prayer; and make every action, every thought, every event, the subject of direct prayer to Almighty God. Thou hast a friend in heaven, thy dearest LORD, Who will cause that thy prayers be heard: watch, therefore; and though thou must not be rash with thy mouth, yet pour out thy heart to thy Father Which is in heaven with reverent fervour, and in perfect faith that thou wilt have a favourable hearing. But for the subject of these thy supplications, thou must indeed watch; for thou must not utter before God what is not the direct act of thy will and the conviction of thy mind. Thou must sift thy feelings, watch over thy mind, and keep it as a well ordered store-house; and then thou mayest produce before thy God those matters which import thee most to lay before Him.

Thou, O most gracious, most loving Father, wilt accept what I offer Thee, according to what I have; Thou seest my heart, O LORD, and canst discern whatever there is either

faulty or in accordance with Thy will. I beseech Thy goodness to help my weak endeavours at rooting out all evil, and implanting Thy graces; I am unable of myself, but be with me, LORD; send me help from above, and strengthen me out of Zion. *Amen.*

Wednesday

AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

**AND ABOVE ALL THINGS HAVE FERVENT CHARITY AMONG
YOURSELVES. — 1 Peter, iv. 8.**

O GOD the King of glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son JESUS CHRIST with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; We beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine HOLY GHOST to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour CHRIST is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Let me consider that the more pure and fervent charity is, the nearer it approaches to the Divine nature. In GOD, in CHRIST, and in the HOLY GHOST, there resides the most pure, fervent, fruitful, and transcendant love; and to verify this statement I have only to consider,

for a few moments, all that each divine Person in the Holy and Undivided TRINITY has wrought for us. And love becomes pure, when we love one another, not for the sake of private interest, but for the love of God, which is the great and unerring pattern we have to follow. For God loves us with a disinterested love; and if any man loves his neighbour for his own private profit and interest, his love is not pure, nor does it in any degree come up to that sublime pattern set us by God Himself. Here is the difference between Christian and heathen charity; a Christian loves his neighbour in God and in CHRIST JESUS, disinterestedly and generously, without mixing up selfish or ignoble motives, and is therefore without falsehood, dissimulation, or counterfeit. The heathen polluted their deeds with self-honour, and interest, and other sinister ends, which mingled with the best of their actions.

Oh, what a holy and happy state of mind is that which shows love in every action; where mercy and tenderness pervade the whole temper, and vigorous efforts to relieve, and comfort, and soothe, are the fruits thereof! When we have the affairs of our neighbour as much at

heart as our own, what courtesy, what consideration for the feelings, what tenderness, what self-devotion, are the result; if need be, we are ready to lay down our life for the brethren! This is a state of love, not to be attained without long and earnest striving, our hindrances are many, our dispositions are rebellious; but if we seek to be CHRIST's, let us go on cultivating it, for it is the very spirit of CHRIST Himself!

Oh, my soul, have fervent charity; for on the wings of this love the prayers of Christians sweetly ascend to heaven. By prayer, all good gifts are to be obtained; and without it, all helps and consolations are sought for in vain. But their prayer must spring from this all-enlivening spirit of love; for God gives ear to no prayers but those that are grounded on faith and charity.

“If two of you agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father Which is in heaven.”

Rouse thyself then, O my soul; each individual must make the effort, and then harmony and agreement will be among Christians upon earth. Live in the spirit of love; let peace

Wednesday after Ascension Day. 69

and union be revived : for where peace is, there
the God of peace ; and where He is, there
He hath promised His blessing, and life for
evermore.

Thursday

BEFORE WHITSUNDAY.

IF ANY MAN MINISTER, LET HIM DO IT AS OF THE ABILITY
WHICH GOD GIVETH. — 1 Peter, iv. 11.

O GOD the King of glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son JESUS CHRIST with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine HOLY GHOST to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour CHRIST is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, one God, world without end. *Amen.*


We are all partakers of the grace of God. Our blessed Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, after He had delivered us from the thralldom of sin, ascended into heaven, and thence sent His HOLY SPIRIT to His dearly beloved and lately found children. This gift it is still the high

privilege of the Church of CHRIST to inherit; and it is by Baptism that we receive the seeds and beginnings of that grace which we are to cherish and cultivate, if we would have it to become a goodly tree, whose branches reach up to heaven. Each baptised person is a possessor of this gift, and by it he becomes a minister of God. God has bestowed upon him something, from which he expects some acknowledgment and return to Himself, and also that some portion of it should be ministered to the members of His Body, whom in a lower sense He considers as part of Himself. Seeing, then, that I am a minister of God, let me consider how I am "to wait on my ministry."

First, I am manifestly in duty bound to render service, praise, and adoration to God, my Creator, my Redeemer, my Sanctifier; and the duties of my ministry plainly require that this should be done in as perfect a manner as my imperfect nature admits of; but even while bewailing my manifold lets and hindrances, I must not forget that I have supernatural aid from God the HOLY SPIRIT, and that He will do that for me which I could not do for myself. I shall, in waiting upon my ministry, consider

72 Thursday before Whitsunday.

my imperfections, my sinful inclinations, my downward tendencies; and I shall use my best efforts to subdue, to purify, to raise my thoughts, inclinations, and habits, so as to make my body a temple fit for the HOLY SPIRIT to dwell in. I shall also examine my mental qualifications, my talents, the good points of my character; and these I shall cultivate and improve, so as to make them all "ministers of God for good." I must remember that vanity consists in parading good qualities, or such as are supposed to be good, for the admiration of men; but that knowing them, and cultivating them for the service and to the glory of God, is far from leading to vanity. Alas! our best talents, our most strenuous exertions, are not worthy to be brought into the presence of the Most High. It is His love, and mercy, and kindness above, that makes Him regard them! And, as regards the members of CHRIST'S Body, our dear brethren in CHRIST JESUS, we have a ministry to perform; our best endeavours for their temporal welfare, our efforts to promote their spiritual improvement, we owe to God. The very talents and good qualities which are to be God's by our special dedication, are to become so by



their being used in the service and for the benefit of men. Our very faults must be warnings to them: our intercourse and conversation, and our attendance in the house of the LORD; our behaviour when there; our goings out and comings in;—all ought to be in some way used, not only for our own benefit, but for the benefit of our fellow servants and fellow heirs of God's gracious promises. If they be not used for the benefit, they will be entirely turned to the harm and the destruction of souls, both theirs and ours; there is no negative conduct, no middle course. O my soul, remember this, and be very diligent in thy improvement of God's gracious gifts to thee; spend health, strength, talents, time, money, all that thou hast, in God's service and to His glory. Thou wilt still be a miserably unprofitable servant; but thou wilt have given "thy best, thine all."

Friday

BEFORE WHITSUNDAY.

THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH
JESUS CHRIST.—1 Peter, iv. 11.

O GOD the King of glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son JESUS CHRIST with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; We beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine HOLY GHOST to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our SAVIOUR CHRIST is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

How greatly are we indebted to the bounty of the LORD, for having redeemed us with so precious a ransom, saved us with so noble a gift, honoured us with so high a privilege! What love, what reverence, and fear, and thanks, and praise, and glory, ought wretched

sinners to pay to a God, Who has thus pitied, and loved, and rescued, and sanctified us ! The whole of our ability and our knowledge, our life and being, ought to be given up as His just tribute. But what can I do ; what have I, what am I, that is not His already ? My soul, beseech thy God to impart to thee, for His Name's sake, of His good treasure, of His own good gifts, that thou mayest have something to offer Him back ; and that, by His grace assisting thee, thou mayest be enabled to serve and please Him in faithfulness and truth.

For, alas ! I am very sensible that the power of serving and pleasing Him is entirely His gift, since every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Light, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. And in this state I address myself to Thee, O Father Almighty, acknowledging Thy power ; O Father of Mercy, depending on Thy goodness ; O LORD Incomprehensible, adoring Thy infinite perfections ; O Maker and Restorer of all things by Thy Son JESUS CHRIST, in confidence of Thy love through that sweetest Saviour, Whom Thou hast vouchsafed to send out of Thy own bosom for our

benefit; to take our life, that He might give us His; to be perfect Man of the substance of His mother, as He is perfect God of the substance of Thee His Father; perfect God and perfect Man but still one CHRIST, begotten from all eternity but born in time, Immortal and mortal, Creator and creature, Strong and weak, Victor and vanquished, the Nourisher and the nourished, the Shepherd and the sheep, dead for a season yet ever living with Thee. In the name of this wonderful Person I venture to approach Thee; and well may I, since He Who cannot lie has left this joyful assurance to all that love Him, That whatsoever such ask the Father in His Name, He will not fail to give it to them. By this great, this true, this only perfect High Priest, this Bishop of souls, Who offered Himself a spotless and propitiatory sacrifice to Thy justice; by this good Shepherd, Who laid down His life for His sheep; by this Mediator and Redeemer, Who sitteth at Thy right hand making intercession for us; I implore Thy mercy, O most tender Lover of mankind, that Thou, this Thy Son, and Thy Blessed Spirit, would grant me grace worthily and constantly to

magnify Thy glorious Name; with deep remorse and godly sorrow for my sins, with humility and tears, with reverence, and with fear and trembling. But though the spirit within me is willing, yet I am weighed down by this corruptible body: I beseech Thee, O God, to stir up and quicken me, and so influence my will that I may vigorously strive to keep Thy commandments, and endeavour steadfastly to persevere therein. Draw me, I humbly pray Thee, continually nearer to my ascended Saviour, that He at last may bring me to those happy mansions where He now sits at Thy right hand, — where is life and bliss everlasting, where joyful love abounds, and fear is done away; where Thou, with that blessed Son, as does that blessed Son with Thee, livest and reignest in the unity of the Divine Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*


Saturday

BEFORE WHITSUNDAY.

**TO WHOM BE PRAISE AND DOMINION FOR EVER AND
EVER. — 1 Peter, iv. 11.**

O GOD the King of glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son JESUS CHRIST with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; We beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine HOLY GHOST to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour CHRIST is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O my soul, God forbid that thou shouldest think the Cross of CHRIST a thing to be ashamed of; that thou shouldest not glory in it; nay, that thou shouldest think any other thing a matter of just glory and advantage to thee, but only the Name of thy Omniscent



LORD CHRIST JESUS! Make thou thy boast then in that Name which is above every name, in which whosoever is blessed on earth shall be blessed also in heaven. Let them give thanks whom the **LORD** hath redeemed; yea, let them ever praise His holy Name. O come and let us ascribe honour to our Saviour, Who has done so great things for us; great things whereof we do, and ought to rejoice. Lift up your hearts and join your voices, all ye children of grace and redemption, and let us magnify His Name together, saying, We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee; we give Thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O **CHRIST** the King of Israel, the Light of the Gentiles, the Prince of all the kings of the earth, the **LORD** of Hosts, the Power of God Almighty in its utmost strength and perfection.

We worship Thee, O precious and invaluable Ransom of our souls, O our Peace, and most acceptable Sacrifice, Who by the sweet smelling savour of Thy sin-offering didst incline the Father, Who dwelleth on high, to cast an eye of pity upon His vile creatures here below, and didst open a way to reconciliation for the sons of wrath and perdition. We proclaim the

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praise of Thy mercy, O blessed JESUS, and out of the abundance of our hearts do gratefully recount the sweetness of Thy love. We offer unto Thee our daily sacrifice of gratitude and glory, for the incomprehensible excellence of Thy goodness, and for that tender and unbounded compassion which Thou hast been pleased to show to us miserable, degraded sinners. Praise then the LORD, O my soul, and magnify the mercies of the compassionate JESUS. Tell it out among all the world how exceeding gracious He hath been to thee, and give Him the honour due unto His glorious Name; for His Name only is excellent, and His praise above heaven and earth!

Whit-Sunday.

AND THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY
GHOST. — Acts, ii. 4.

O GOD, Who miraculously sentest down Thy Holy Ghost to supply the absence of Thy Son, and to comfort His forlorn followers, and instruct them in all things necessary to their great work, the conversion of the world; grant, we meekly beseech Thee, that our devout commemoration at this time of those fiery tongues which sat upon each of their heads, and which produced such glorious effects, may increase the fervour of my heart to continue and attest, by all the fruits of grace, that the same Spirit still does abide with and live with me; through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who with Thee, in the unity of the same blessed Spirit, liveth and reigneth one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Here is another high festival, on which I must prepare my soul to rejoice, and praise God for His goodness, and for the wonders He doeth for the children of men. This is the day of Pentecost: behold the gathering together of all the believers in our Lord and Saviour. They are brethren; but as yet they are cemented together purely by the love they all bear to their crucified and ascended Lord. We know how fickle is the human heart, and how weak a bond mere feeling is in keeping men together after the first excitement is over. These men are in the full tide of their love and adoration of their Lord and Master; and they are waiting for that supernatural gift which He promised them, and which is to cement them together, a Building, strong, imperishable, whose Chief Corner Stone is CHRIST JESUS the LORD.


Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. They were all illuminated with a pure light, and all inflamed with a fervent heat; and to communicate both these to every nation, they were all endued

with the gift of tongues. Thus was the promise of our Lord fulfilled, and thus the messengers of everlasting peace prepared; miraculously baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and perfectly qualified for their great commission.

And now a great multitude is gathered together on hearing the fame of these wonderful things; and Peter stands up, surrounded by the eleven. He speaks to them of the prophecies which announced this marvellous event; he speaks to them, but with reverent reserve, of Him Whom he so ardently loved — of JESUS of Nazareth; and he ends his sermon by declaring that He Whom they crucified is both LORD and CHRIST.

These words, dictated by the Holy Spirit of our God, penetrated into the hearts of Peter's hearers. They were pricked in the heart, and exclaimed, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then said Peter, "Repent, and be baptized." He shewed them of the salvation which is by CHRIST JESUS, and he promised them the gift of the Holy Ghost; three thousand were in this manner brought to the knowledge of salvation, and received the inestimable,

unspeakable gift, which CHRIST JESUS our Lord has purchased, and has sent down to His Church. And still the same Blessed Spirit abides in the Church, and still conveys the same blessings to her faithful children. Canst thou, O my soul, continue a member of this blessed Society, and not search more diligently for the graces bestowed upon those who are faithful in all things. O beseech thy God to vouchsafe unto thee the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of knowledge, the spirit of holiness and of the fear of the LORD; with these strengthening aids and companions of thy pilgrimage, thou mayest still hope to attain the end of thy endeavours, even thy salvation; but it will be a struggle, a warfare; put no trust in any thing but the strength of the Cross. Thy crucified Saviour marks thy warfare; lay hold on His Cross, appropriate to thyself the cleansing efficacy of His Blood; bury thy old man with Him; rise with Him to newness of life. Behold Him sitting at the right hand of the Father; fall down, worship, kneel before Him! He sends thee His Holy Spirit to quicken thee, to purify thee, and to raise thee to His eternal kingdom.



~~Whit-Monday.~~

I WILL PRAY THE FATHER, AND HE WILL GIVE YOU
ANOTHER COMFORTER.— St. John, xiv. 16.

O GOD the HOLY GHOST, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the Principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness in which Thou wilt, in the largest manner, communicate Thyself to happy souls; where, in the enjoyment of Thee, O Holy, Blessed, and Glorious TRINITY, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

How tenderly did our gracious Master sympathize with His disciples! Though He could

no longer be with them as in times past, yet He would not leave them helpless. He, the Incarnate Son of God, was about to ascend to the right hand of Power; and for the merits of His all-atoning sacrifice receiving gifts for men, He would procure them another Comforter, a Person, Who would be to them what He Himself had been;—a Person, Who would be a Friend and Comforter to them, and would abide, in that character, in the Church for ever. Here is manifested that the Blessed and Holy Spirit of God is indeed a Person. None but God could succeed to the place which our LORD JESUS CHRIST held with respect to His disciples; none could be a Comforter as He was, but God. This then was their consolation; they were to have a Comforter, Who, in their guilt and their helplessness, would teach them; Who would sanctify their tempers, their minds, their conversation; Who would pity their weakness, and impart to them that peace which passeth all understanding.

Such a Comforter, God the Holy Ghost, came down to the Church on the day of Pentecost. He is God from everlasting to everlasting; one with the Father and the Son. As

God, He moved on the face of the waters at the creation; as God, He inspired the holy men, under the old dispensation, to perform all the holy actions and great works which I read of in the Old Testament; as God, He inspired holy men to write the Scriptures; and, as God, on the day of Pentecost, He assumed His office in the divine scheme of Redemption, as the Paraclete or Comforter.

And now let me take these thoughts home to me, and consider that there is a Divine Person even now ready to come to me, to comfort me in all my troubles, to infuse strength into my soul, and to assist me in my spiritual warfare. But am I a fit temple for the Holy Ghost to dwell in? Let me seriously consider this. Am I desirous not only to profess godliness, but to lead a consistent and godly life? Am I determined to keep alive the grace I have had conferred upon me, by constant, regular, and earnest prayer? Do I remember that the continual presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church, should make me very desirous constantly to partake of the privileges granted to me in her? and that, therefore, I should be constant in public worship; obedient and teach-

able when her doctrines are expounded by her ministers; constant in attendance at the Holy Communion—where I shall receive, if I go with a faithful and loving heart, grace, and strength, and peace, ~~and~~ joy; all bestowed by that Divine Comforter, God the Holy Ghost, Whose presence is my only hope, my only joy, and my only earnest of future blessings and future glory.

Tuesday
IN WHITSUN WEEK.

NOW WHEN THE APOSTLES WHICH WERE AT JERUSALEM HEARD THAT SAMARIA HAD RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD, THEY SENT UNTO THEM PETER AND JOHN: WHO, WHEN THEY WERE COME DOWN, PRAYED FOR THEM, THAT THEY MIGHT RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST. — Acts, viii. 14, 15.

O GOD the HOLY GHOST, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the Principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness where Thou wilt, in the largest manner, communicate Thyself to happy souls; where, in the enjoyment of Thee, O Holy and Glorious Blessed TRINITY, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

When Peter and John were sent to the people of Samaria, they persisted in the faith of their departed Lord, and desired with intense devotion and love that He would shower down the gifts He had purchased for those who love Him, upon the faithful in Samaria: they prayed, and the Holy Ghost did indeed descend upon the converts. He, Who is the Spirit of prayer, grants His influences to our prayers, and He moves us to approach the Throne of Grace. Why do we ascribe all these blessed effects to Him? It is because He so closely unites our hearts to God in that communion we have with Him in all our spiritual duties, because He is that Everlasting Spirit, Who, with the Father and the Son, makes up the Unity of the Godhead. Our spiritual relation with God is begun by faith, in our Baptism, and is the gift of the Spirit, which we prevail upon Him to bestow by our prayers; and our prayers are acceptable, when offered up in the Spirit, assisting and inspiring our devotions. When incense was offered in the temple of Solomon, it was filled with the glory of the LORD; and if I offer up my prayers—"the offerings of a sweet-smelling savour"—

the temple of my heart will be filled with the glory of the Holy Spirit.

Let me pause, and admire the mercy and kindness of God. The Son intercedes for us; the Father promises to hear and accept our prayers through that powerful intercession; and the Blessed Spirit teaches us what prayers to offer up from the altar of our hearts, and Himself prays with us. Our merciful God gives us affections to pray to Him when He bestows upon us the influences of His grace and the spirit of prayer; He also renders our prayers effectual, being always ready to hear us; and He answers us, not according to our wills, but as He knows is best for us.

As long as the blessed Spirit of God abides in us, so long there is a happy union between God and our souls; but no sooner does man by his sins become apostate to his faith in CHRIST and his charity to his fellow-creatures, and hereby does despite unto the Spirit of God, but there follows a separation; and this blessed union between God and the soul ceases to exist. He who has the Spirit of God hateth not his brother; and the reason of this is, that this Spirit incorporates him into the mystical Body

of CHRIST, of which all the faithful are members. Who ever hated a member, any of those members, of which his body is composed? Nay, if the Spirit of God govern our actions, we shall love our enemies also. Let me, then, seek ever more and more to be influenced by this holy ever-blessed Spirit; let me spend myself in the service of God, in loving and serving His creatures; let me pray without ceasing, that the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit may descend and fill my whole soul, and that It may bring forth in me those exquisite fruits of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

For these blessed fruits, and all His holy gifts, be honour and glory to this Blessed Spirit, with the Father and the Son, throughout all ages. *Amen.*

Wednesday
IN WHITSUN WEEK.

I AM COME THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE.
St. John, x. 10.

O GOD the HOLY GHOST, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the Principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness in which Thou wilt, in the largest manner, communicate Thyself to happy souls; where, in the enjoyment of Thee, O Holy, Blessed, and Glorious TRINITY, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thy benefits, O my God, are mighty. Thou

art the Hope of those from whom all other hope is fled; Thou art the Crown of glory which shall adorn every head that overcometh; Thou, the eternal Fulness of those blessed souls who hunger and thirst after Thy righteousness; Thou, the never-failing Comfort, — communicating Thyself to those who are content to forego all other comforts, and are content to abide in Thee, and seek Thy graces and blessings as their only and sole good.

My Lord and my God! bring me, I pray Thee, out of the prison of my worldly desires and external senses; let me give thanks unto Thee, and rejoice in the light of Thy countenance. Grant me the help of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may appropriate to myself that life given me by Thee, my dearest Lord and Saviour; that Spirit Which will breathe into me the breath of spiritual life, Which will strengthen my will and quicken my desire of serving Thee; that Spirit Which will unite me to Thee, and through Thee to the great mystical Body of which Thou art the Head; and will influence my love for each of my fellow-members, so that I should sooner think of hurting or injuring myself, than of doing any despite unto any of

Thy elect. Oh, give me this Thy life; this new, spiritual existence; which, as it is Thy purchase, so is it Thy free gift unto men.

O Holy Spirit, descend into my soul, turn everything there into light and life: let no corrupt affections, unholy desires, or stubborn will, remain there; but bring all into subjection to the law of God, and keep it pure, unblemished, a holy temple for Thyself. I know and acknowledge Thee the One True God, O Holy Spirit; proceeding from the Father and the Son; of the same substance and eternity with the Father and the Son, our Advocate and Comforter; Who didst descend like a dove, upon our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and didst appear in fiery tongues upon the Apostles; Who hast, from the beginning of the world, shed abroad the gifts of Thy grace upon all the saints and chosen of God, and opened the mouths of the Prophets that they might reveal the wonders of the Kingdom; Who, with the Father and the Son together, art worshipped in all the Churches of the saints. Among whom, I also, Thy meanest servant, beg leave to publish Thy praises for the saving light communicated to my soul. For Thou art the true Light, the

saving fire of God, to Whom all saints are subject; Thou art the Spirit of Truth, Who, by Thy unction teachest us all truth; without Whose grace it is impossible to please God; for Thou art God of God, and Light proceeding in an ineffable manner from the Father of Lights, and from His Son, JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

With these, Thou art co-equal, and co-eternally united in the same essence; and with them reignest, and art glorified by a most stupendous and most holy union.

Thursday
IN WHITSUN WEEK.

AND THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH DAILY SUCH AS
SHOULD BE SAVED. — Acts, ii. 47.

O GOD the HOLY GHOST, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the Principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness in which Thou wilt, in the largest manner, communicate Thyself to happy souls; where, in the enjoyment of Thee, O Holy and Blessed TRINITY, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The great work which we celebrate on the
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feast of Pentecost is now fairly commenced; the Church is a real, living, and active Society. That "new thing," which, according to the Prophets, the LORD was to do upon earth, was now accomplished; for a Church similar to that which had just been formed, had never been seen upon earth. What can be a greater proof of this than the aspect of this first Christian community? The Holy Spirit works in it in an entirely new manner, and shows that a new period of God's government has begun.

What a glorious picture does the first planting of the Word present! The life of heaven seems indeed to have established its dwelling-place in this vale of tears! A community dedicated to God consisting of three thousand souls; but a community such as neither Moses nor Elias nor any of the old saints had ever beheld!

Alas! alas! what a sad and wide difference there is between this apostolic Church and that of our own times: the same sad change that has taken place in the land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands; where God led His chosen people, and where He did so many signs and wonders; where He decreed

that His well-beloved Son should take up His abode while on earth ; and which is now a rocky and desert waste, surrounded by the confusion of Babel, and the barbarism of the Crescent ! Still, the Holy Spirit of God remains with the Church, and it behoves all her children to exert themselves individually to bring back the spirit of the apostolic age, and to cast into the mass the leaven of personal holiness and personal zeal, in order that the whole lump may in time be leavened.

In order to accomplish this, we must put on the whole armour of God ; and in the spirit of meekness and true obedience we must keep all the commandments of God, blameless. Here is no need of terror ; the thunderings and earthquakes of the Law are done away ; but the still small voice of the Spirit in the Gospel is a deep, penetrating, overwhelming sound—not terrifying, but which works itself into the very joints and marrow. The curses no longer ring loud from Mount Ebal ; in their stead we see tears, and drops of blood, a crown of thorns, and a heart of love pierced and broken,— we see a Cross ! The Son of God suffered to purchase for Himself a Church ; the Son of God

is in heaven interceding for His Church. The Holy Ghost is with that Church to keep it and strengthen it, and give it the graces and blessings which were so dearly purchased for it. And so we come round to the everlasting theme, to the one thing needful. Although there may be no terror, and the hair may not stand on end at the sound of Redemption; yet there is an inexpressible melting and softening of the heart: although there may be no fear and anguish as amidst the thunders of the Law; yet there is prostration at the feet of JESUS: although the limbs may not tremble; yet silent tears are dropping which Jesus watches: and although we do not cry out as on Mount Sinai, "I exceedingly fear and quake;" we say what is far better, "LORD JESUS, I am Thine for ever; if I only possess Thee, I ask nothing more, either in heaven or earth."



Friday

IN WHITSUN WEEK.

GOD FORBID THAT I SHOULD GLORY, SAVE IN THE CROSS OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, BY WHOM THE WORLD IS CRUCI-
FIED UNTO ME, AND I UNTO THE WORLD. — Gal. vi. 14.

ALL the honour of the saints is derived from the ignominy our LORD bore at His passion; all their comfort is in the wounds of our dying Saviour; our glory, in His exaltation. How great is Thy pity, O heavenly Father, O LORD GOD Almighty! I have, through my own folly, offended Thee; but I have not been able, through any thing that is in me, to pacify Thy wrath; Thou therefore dost, in CHRIST, reconcile me to Thyself. Behold, therefore, O holy God, the sacrament of Thy own Flesh, and forgive me the guilt of mine. Have a merciful regard to what Thy dear Son has suffered for me, and forget what Thy wicked servant has done against Thee.

My carnal nature has provoked Thee to anger ; let the Flesh of CHRIST, I beseech Thee, incline Thee to pity. Great is what my iniquity doth deserve ; but greater far is what the holiness of my Redeemer has, by His merit, purchased for me. Great is my unrighteousness ; but greater is the righteousness of my Saviour : for as far as God is above man, so far is my wickedness inferior to His goodness ; as in the quality, so likewise in the extensiveness. Whatever I am, I am wholly Thine by condition ; grant that I may be wholly Thine by love. Thou givest me grace to ask ; grant that I may so ask as to receive. Thou givest me grace to seek ; grant that I may find. Thou teachest me to knock ; open, therefore, unto me. From Thee I have all my holy desires ; from Thee let me have the blessings of prevailing. From Thee it proceeds that I have a will to serve Thee ; from Thee let me have the strength to perform it.


O blessed God, Thou just Judge, if I hide my sins, they are incurable ; if I expose them, they are dreadful — they sting me with grief, but they terrify me more with fear ; withhold not, I pray Thee, Thy so bounteous mercy, where Thou findest so much real misery.

Thou findest in me sin that is great; let Thy grace still be greater, and more abound.

O blessed Father, pour not out Thy wrath upon me, when for my sin's sake Thou hast smitten Thine own Son. O holy JESUS, do Thou rescue me from the Divine wrath, Who for me didst bear the weight of it on Thy Cross. O Holy Ghost, protect me with Thy inward consolations against the anger of God, Who, in the Gospel, hast declared mercy to all that are truly penitent and of a contrite heart. O God of Holiness, and just Judge, I can find no place where to hide myself from Thy presence when Thou art angry. If I climb up into heaven, Thou art there; if I go down to hell, behold Thou art there: if I shall take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea, even there Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. To CHRIST, therefore, I will flee, and in His wounds will I hide myself. O merciful God, look down upon the Body of Thy Son, all over bleeding with wounds, and do not behold those wounds my sins have made in my soul; let the blood of Thy Son wash me from all the stains and defilements of sin; hear those most ardent

prayers of His which He offers up to Thee, for the salvation of His elect. O God of Holiness, Thou just Judge, my life strikes terror into my soul; for when I diligently examine into it, it appears all over sin or barrenness; and if there seems to be any fruit of goodness in it, it is so dissembled and imperfect, or, by some means or other, so corrupt, that it may either not please, or even displease Thy eyes.

O JESUS CHRIST, for Thy Name's sake, do unto me according unto Thy Name; look favourably upon me, when in my distress I call upon Thee. If Thou shalt admit me into the spacious bosom of Thy mercy, there will not be then less room in it on my account. It is true, O LORD, my guilty conscience tells me I have deserved damnation, and my repentance is not sufficient to make satisfaction; but yet Thy mercy exceeds all my offences. In Thee, O LORD, do I trust; let me not be confounded for ever. *Amen.*



Saturday

IN WHITSUN WEEK.

FOR THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS
HATH MADE ME FREE FROM THE LAW OF SIN
AND DEATH. — Romans, viii. 2.

O GOD the HOLY GHOST, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the Principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness where Thou wilt, in the largest manner, communicate Thyself to happy souls; where, in the enjoyment of Thee, O Holy and Blessed TRINITY, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O Thou plenteous Source of every good and every perfect gift, shed abroad the cheering light of Thy seven-fold grace over my heart. O Thou Spirit of love and goodness, I most humbly implore Thy seasonable assistances. Thou knowest my faults, my failings, and my necessities; the dimness of my understanding, the perverseness of my affections, the stubbornness of my will: Thou seest that oftentimes I am very weak, infirm of purpose, ill-instructed in Thy blessed motions; or that I am led away by outward circumstances, giddy and careless, knowing my duty but failing to practise it. O then visit me! Send me Thy grace, enlighten my mind, rectify my desires, correct my wanderings, and pardon my omissions; that so I, who invoke Thee here as my Pilot to conduct me through this rough and hazardous sea of life, may, by Thy guidance, be preserved from making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and at length be safely landed at the haven of eternal rest. To Thee I make my prayer, most merciful Father, that Thou, Who gavest me being by Thy creating power, and since didst give me a new and better being by the sufferings of Thy only begotten Son, and

regeneration through Him, wouldst work in me both to will and to do of Thy good pleasure; and fix my thoughts and affections upon such objects only as conduce to Thy honour and my own salvation. And since my frailties are great, and I cannot do what I ought and would, preserve in me a due care to make my peace with Thee daily, by diligent examinations of my conscience, by confessions of my past faults, and resolutions of living better and growing every day more and more in goodness, till at length I obtain the benefits purchased for me by my dear Redeemer. Help me, I beseech Thee, to gain such victories over my sins, and fortify me so effectually against temptations, and grant me to advance so prosperously in the way of holiness, that the remainder of the time I spend in this mortal body, I may be always doing Thee acceptable service, such as Thy Providence shall propose to me.

And when this life shall end, LORD, of Thine infinite mercy grant me an entire remission of all my sins, and reward my imperfect obedience with eternal life.

All which I beg for His merits and medi-

ation, Who died to purchase it for sincere penitents and true believers; and Who now liveth and reigneth with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Trinity Sunday.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, WHICH WAS,
AND IS, AND IS TO COME.— Rev. iv. 8.

O ETERNAL Father, Who by the visible descent of Thy Son to redeem the world, and of Thy Holy Spirit to sanctify the elect, hast wonderfully made Thy Church's own experience facilitate our faith of the Incomprehensible TRINITY; grant me, I beseech Thee, in heart and voice to profess this high and marvellous truth; and rejecting all the suggestions of weak reason, humbly to adore this ineffable mystery of Three co-equal Persons in the same Invisible Deity; till I come hereafter to Thy blissful presence, and see the mystery revealed, O God, our Father, in Thine own glorious Face; through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who with Thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth in the Unity of the Divine Majesty, world without end.

O my soul, seek from the Father, through the intercession of the Son, the grace of the Holy Spirit, that thou mayest embrace the Catholic faith.

I fervently desire to keep the faith whole and undefiled, in its fulness and simplicity, and to worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance. I understand by Substance, *Being, Existence*; by Person, an intelligent Agent, having the distinctive characters of I, Thou, He; and not divided into more intelligent agents capable of the same character. And I believe that there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; Whose Godhead is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.

Let me not seek to explain how these things can be, but let me receive with reverential faith what is revealed. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible; yea, indeed, in-


comprehensible, that is, not to be comprehended within any bounds; or I may take it to mean, that which cannot be conceived or imagined.

Yet there are not three Eternals, neither three Incomprehensibles, nor yet three Uncreated; but *ONE* Eternal, *ONE* Incomprehensible, *ONE* Uncreated. Mysterious but blessed truth! I accept it from the ground of my heart. There is an everlasting distinction between the Persons, though we attempt not to explain how it can be. The Son and the Holy Ghost are both of the Father; the one begotten, the other proceeding. The mode of this we know not. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts; and in this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another, but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal.

So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped. I am silent, O LORD, I am a creature of unclean lips! How can I talk of these wondrous things! Oh! send Thine angel

with the fire of Thy Holy Spirit to touch my tongue; then I will fall prostrate before Thy throne, and exclaim with the four and twenty elders, "Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty;" three times "holy," showing forth the Trinity; "LORD God," denoting the Unity. O LORD, deep here calleth unto deep; deeper is this mystery than heaven is high. Thou, O God, alone art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power.

Daily am I invited to worship the Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity, when I say, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning," when the sons of God shouted for joy; "is now," when the angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven, with the Church on earth, laud and magnify the glorious Name; "and ever shall be," when the Church triumphant shall sing Alleluia eternally in the heavenly Jerusalem. Resolve, O my soul, no longer to pass over this divine hymn as a matter of course, or as a mere ending to each psalm; but each time the solemn words are repeated, let my spirit ascend to the heaven of heavens; there see the Throne, and Him Who sits



thereon, like unto a jasper and a sapphire stone, with the rainbow round about Him ; see the elders, and the seven lamps of fire, and the sea of glass, and the beasts ; and with all thy powers worship, adore, and magnify, the Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity.

Monday

AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

THERE WAS A MAN OF THE PHARISEES, NAMED NICODEMUS,
A RULER OF THE JEWS : THE SAME CAME TO JESUS
BY NIGHT. — John, iii. 1, 2.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD my God ; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

Nicodemus is timid, fearful of what men might say of him, and yet earnestly seeking the right path by which to attain eternal life. He comes to Jesus by night. His courage will lead him far enough to seek Jesus secretly ; but it will not carry him to the point of defying public opinion in his search. He comes in the darkness and stillness of night ; and behold the calm majesty with which our blessed Lord

converses with the timid hearer, on the deep things of the Spirit. Him who cometh to the LORD, He will in no wise cast out; and so was it with Nicodemus. That holy intercourse was blessed to him; and I may suppose that our LORD, regarding his faith, gave him such a measure of grace as enabled him to cast off by degrees his timidity, and to gird himself with strength for the warfare that was before him. I find him, in the narrative given by St. John, improved in courage, reasoning with the Jews for condemning our LORD unheard; and see the perfection of his courage, and his love, in his bringing a costly mixture of spices to embalm that precious and sacred Body, after it had undergone the shame and pain of the Cross; after it had suffered for the sins of the whole world, and among those sins for the cowardice of Nicodemus.

Consider, my soul, this example, and remember that thou art verily guilty in the same matter. How often hast thou made thyself appear to the world less religious than thou didst hope thou wert; and then, on retiring to the silence and solitude of thy chamber, thou hast prayed as if thy Lord was very dear to thee. What

is this but coming to JESUS by night? H often hast thou passed by an occasion of confessing thy Lord, when that confession would have brought ridicule upon thee? In thy heart was faith; and yet, how weak! but didst thou not come to the Lord by night, instead of standing in the open face of day and boldly confessing thy faith in JESUS thy Saviour?

But approach the loving and gracious Lord; converse with Him; open the windows of thy heart wide to admit Him. Then wilt thou lose thy fear; thou wilt deprecate the wrath of His enemies; and thou wilt bring the spices of thy prayers, thine alms, thy self-dedication, yea, the sacrifice of thy body, soul, and spirit; and thou wilt openly, in the sight of men, lay them before thy Lord, thy Saviour and thy God.

O Thou, Who hast received me, Thy worthy servant, when I was brought unto Thee to be Thy soldier and servant; grant that I may ever manfully fight under Thy banner against sin, the world, and the devil. Grant that I may continue faithful unto Thee till life's end; and that, being dead unto sin and

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living unto righteousness, and being buried with CHRIST in His death, I may crucify the old man and utterly abolish the whole body of sin; and that as I was made partaker of the death of Thy Son, I may be also a partaker of His resurrection; so that finally, with the residue of Thy holy Church, I may be an inheritor of Thine everlasting kingdom, through CHRIST, our Lord. *Amen.*

Tuesday

AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO THEE, EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN
AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF
GOD. — St. John, iii. 3.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD my God; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

Yea, Lord, I know that I was born in wickedness, and conceived in sin. I know that by Adam's transgression sin entered into the world, and death by sin. It was Thy free and unmerited mercy alone that freed us from this state of perdition. Thou tookest upon Thee the iniquity of us all; Thou becamest Man; Thou hast given us an example; Thou hast left us ordinances; Thou becamest a curse for us by suffering the penalty of the accursed;

and Thou hast blotted out the hand-writing which was against us. Thou sayest, that, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Some great change must be wrought in sinful and corrupt man, before he can be fit to see the kingdom of the all-pure God. It is wonderful how *any* means can render what is so corrupt and impure, fit for the unspeakable glories and joys of the heavenly kingdom! But with God all things are possible, and He has sent us grace from above by which He cleanses us; He regards that as pure, which before was impure; He looks upon the face of His CHRIST, He listens to the continual intercession of His dearly beloved Son, and He accepts, for His merits, our imperfect obedience instead of that entire righteousness which we have not to offer.

I have been born again; I have received the gift of the Spirit; God has purified me: can I enter the kingdom of glory? Have I never vexed, or grieved, or quenched the Spirit? have I been guilty of not sufficiently valuing my great privilege? have I forgotten that this is not my abiding city, and that I am a citizen of the heavenly kingdom? and have I never

been regardless of my vows to Him, Who, to purchase my redemption, left His throne in heaven, took upon Him the form of a servant, and poured out His Blood as a propitiation for me?

Let the mercies of our God be so constantly before thee, my soul, that thou mayest preserve a sense of their greatness. The mere fact that God should stoop to behold such creatures as we are, and should have contrived such a mighty scheme for our redemption, ought to be enough to overwhelm thee with gratitude and awe. O strive by constant meditation, and recollection of all these mercies, to keep alive in thee such love as will make thee avoid all the first approaches of sin, and will cause all things belonging to the Spirit to live and grow in thee.

Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way: and walk in the law of the Lord.

Blessed are they that keep His testimonies: and seek Him with their whole heart.

For they who do no wickedness: walk in His ways.

Thou hast charged: that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments.

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O that my ways were made so direct : that I might keep Thy statutes !

So shall I not be confounded : while I have respect unto all Thy commandments.

I will thank Thee with an unfeigned heart : when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness.

I will keep Thy ceremonies : O forsake me not utterly.

Wednesday

AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT,
HE CANNOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF
GOD. — John, iii. 5.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD my God; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

The things belonging to the Spirit can only be spiritually discerned. Nicodemus, on hearing of the new birth, could only think of the birth according to the course of nature. He knew not of the birth of the soul. Our blessed Lord, to shew the absolute necessity and certainty of this new birth, affirms it by "Verily, verily," as He was always wont to preface an important truth. God is not a man that He should lie; neither the son of man that He

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should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it; or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good? He saith, "Verily, verily, unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." As man is composed of two parts, body and soul, so the mode of the latter birth is twofold; water, the visible part, cleansing the body; the Spirit, by His invisible co-operation, changing the invisible soul.

Let me consider that as an infant my parents took me to the font; I was there, in the arms of God's minister, received into the number of CHRIST's flock, and was signed with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter I should not be ashamed to confess the faith of CHRIST crucified.

O that I could feel that I had kept my soul pure and undefiled from its new birth! even as pure as is the body of a little infant — fair and lovely in all its proportions!

But alas, in many ways, at various times, I have defiled the baptismal purity of my soul; although I trust that, by God's mercy, I have not entirely fallen away from the grace then given. Blessed, praised, and glorified be the

Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity for thus admitting me to their communion and fellowship.

I thank Thee, O LORD, that Thou hast buried me with Thee in baptism. O grant that I may rise with Thee to newness of life; grant that, — as the world loses its charm and loosens its hold upon me, as the devil becomes less frequent and more weak in his attacks, and as the flesh is more and more brought into subjection, — as from a well of pure water upspring ever fresh and sparkling streams, so from the spirit, with which Thou hast endued me, may flow earnest meditations, frequent prayers, constant lookings for and longings after the eternal and immutable things of the heavenly kingdom, that so my whole self may become a temple filled with the Holy Ghost.

These are my aspirations. Too high they are, and not to be realized; for I know how unworthy I am of any extraordinary spiritual gifts; but Thou knowest, O LORD, the secrets of my heart, and while I humbly endeavour to follow the motions of Thy good Spirit, I say with the Psalmist: —

My soul hath patiently tarried for the LORD,
for He is my help and my shield.

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For my heart shall rejoice in Him ; because
I have hoped in His holy Name.

Let Thy merciful kindness, O LORD, be upon
me ; like as I do put my trust in Thee.


Thursday

AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

MARVEL NOT THAT I SAID UNTO THEE, YE MUST BE
BORN AGAIN. — John, iii. 7.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD my God; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

Great are the mysteries of Godliness ! Nicodemus could not understand how a man could be born again. Our Lord tells him, “Marvel not.” It is indeed a great and wonderful mystery, the secret operation of the Holy Spirit of God; how it works inwardly, quietly, but powerfully; invisibly, yet to be apprehended by the eye of faith; it cometh, it goeth, like the wind. But we are told not to question, or doubt, or marvel: we must receive in full



faith, in firm hope, in entire confidence, even as little children receive the information and instruction of their parents.

How mysterious is every thing with which thou art surrounded, O my soul! even thy existence in my body is a great mystery. How art thou now active, alive to every good impression; now asleep, overpowered by heaviness; now giving way to sloth, or to the impressions of worldly pleasure; now enjoying the full tide of spiritual enjoyments; now dry and listless, dull and heavy; now bowed down by the infirmities of the flesh; now exhilarated by an unusual flow of bodily health! What is all this mysterious connection of self with that which is within self, — with that also which is external to it? O how great are the wonders of the Most High! Receive them all, O my soul, with the tender, loving, trusting faith of a little child; and by so doing escape all the questions and disputings raised by curious minds, who will only believe what they understand, but who only undermine the faith, disturb the tranquillity, and unsettle the calm peace of a soul that truly waits upon its God.

Behold, LORD, I resign myself entirely unto

Thee; deal with Thy servant as seemeth good unto Thee. I desire to do nothing but according to Thy will; wish for nothing but Thyself; and I would ask for nothing but the will, the wish, the power of serving Thee better all the remaining days of my life. And in the world to come, LORD, grant me a place near Thee, under Thy feet, anywhere, that I may enjoy that beatific vision for which my soul longs and thirsts, even as the hart which desireth the water brooks.

Friday

AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

AND AS MOSES LIFTED UP THE SERPENT IN THE WILDERNESS, EVEN SO MUST THE SON OF MAN BE LIFTED UP: THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. — St. John, iii. 14, 15.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD my God; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

How honoured is Nicodemus! not only does our gracious Lord vouchsafe to mention to him the gift of Baptism, but He proceeds to show him a glimpse of the source of it — the Cross! I remember that the serpent was the origin of all sin; that the Children of Israel were bitten by serpents while in the wilderness: Moses, by the commandment of God, lifted up a brazen serpent, and those who looked thereon were

healed. Even so we, children of the first Adam, wandering in the wilderness of this world, are bitten by the deadly serpents of sin; the eternal Son of God took upon Him [the likeness of sinful flesh, and was lifted up on the Cross,—we look on Him and are healed.

Rejoice, O my soul, that thou art become a member and child of that second Adam; that thou art washed and gifted with the Holy Spirit in thy Baptism; and that now thou canst raise thine eyes to the Cross in full faith that He, Who is there lifted up and hath there poured out His soul unto death, hath power to raise thee from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, and finally to bring thee to eternal life. Believe, therefore, for thou hearest what will be the reward of thy belief. But let thy belief bring forth fruits meet for the repentance thou owest unto thy Lord. Lift up thine eyes unto the Cross. Cast down and leave upon the earth all things belonging to the earth; all infirmities of the flesh and of the spirit; thy besetting sin; all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness; the lust of the flesh; the lust of the eyes; the pride of life; every motion of body and spirit contrary to

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His holy will ; and lift up thyself unto thy Lord. Set thy affection on things above ; fasten thyself unto His Cross ; be with Him in every word and work ; and thou shalt not perish, but have everlasting life.

I must needs love Thee, O LORD JESUS CHRIST, with my whole heart, with my whole soul, with my whole strength, and follow Thy steps, that hast vouchsafed to die for me. And how can this be wrought in me but by Thee ? Let my soul cleave unto Thee, for all its strength hangeth upon Thee.

And now, O LORD my Redeemer, I adore Thee as very God, I trust in Thee, I hope in Thee, and with all the desire in my power I pant after Thee ; help my imperfections. Bless God thy Saviour, O my soul, and magnify His Name for ever. *Amen.*

Saturday

AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

St. John, iii. 15.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD my God; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

I must consider that here I have no abiding city. This world is not my home; I am journeying onward, and daily taking my course, each day more decidedly than the last, towards everlasting perdition or eternal life. In a moment, when I least expect it, this life may be over; I shall go into eternity. Will it be a happy or a miserable eternity?

There are two habitations in the world to come; one an abode of misery, of death, of

chains, of fire and brimstone, of groans and agonies ; the other, a place of bliss, of tranquillity, of verdure and of dew, of joys unspeakable and full of glory.

Choose, my soul, to which of these thou wilt go. If thou desire heaven, believe in JESUS, and walk in the paths which lead to heaven, clothed in the robe of righteousness, and taking heed that thy faith brings forth fruit worthy of thy high calling. If thou shouldst walk in the way to hell, thou wilt soon find thyself there ; the works of the flesh, if thou indulgest thyself in them, will bring thee in time to their father, the devil.

If, therefore, thou wouldst be saved, keep eternal life always before thee. If thou art continually meditating on eternity, thou wilt not become attached to the goods of this world.

Endeavour so to regulate all thy actions that they may be so many steps towards heaven. Mark well thy going ; one false step may lose thee. Thy way may seem heavy, and the prospect oftentimes dark, but thou knowest not what bliss may suddenly rise upon thee, and if thou keep JESUS always in sight, thou art sure not to lose thy way.

O God, I believe in life eternal. Henceforth I will live only to Thee. Hitherto I have lived for myself, and have lost Thee, my sovereign good: I beseech Thee, let me never more lose Thee, but let me believe in Thee, serve Thee, and love Thee for evermore. *Amen.*

First Sunday after Trinity.

BELOVED, LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER: FOR LOVE IS OF GOD;
AND EVERY ONE THAT LOVETH IS BORN OF GOD,
AND KNOWETH GOD. — 1 St. John, iv. 7.

COME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspirations; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable through **JESUS CHRIST.**

If I consider the nature of love, I continually go back to God, Who is the true source and origin of love. He is the fountain from whence springs an immensity and boundless depth of love, which no poor human reason can fathom. How is it possible to understand the extent of a love which has done such things for those who are continually casting aside and despising

His gifts; of a love which gave His only Son to suffer such things for so ungrateful a race! Love is the greatest gift that God can bestow on us; Himself is love. It does the work of all other graces, for love can compass anything, and will endeavour after anything for the beloved object. It is a grace which loves God for Himself, and our neighbour for His sake. The consideration of God's goodness, and of all the graces and benefits which He showers down upon us, may be, and is commonly, the beginning of love to Him; but having once tasted the sweetness of that love, we proceed to love Him for Himself; we pass from passion to reason, from thinking to adoring, from sense to spirit, from being wrapt up in ourselves to union with God. What a picture is this! and how is it possible to attain to so great a height of love? Consider, my soul, how thou mayest arrive at this state, when thy hopes will be centred on God, thy wishes all tend to the One Object, and thy prayers will be the fervent communion and never-ending intercourse between thee and thy God.

Consider, that love does all things that may please the beloved object. The great instance

of our love that God requires of us, is, that we keep His commandments.

Love seeks out all secret intimations and signals of His pleasure Whom we love. Love gives all things, so as to advance the interest of the Beloved; and it suffers all things imposed by Him, not only quietly, but cheerfully and willingly. Love attaches itself to the friends, and wishes to serve all those who are interesting to the Beloved; and herein we perceive the well-spring of love to our neighbour, which is therefore a necessary attendant on love to God.

Love endeavours to be ever present with the Beloved; it clings to all the instances of His goodness, repeats the stories of His greatness, and is never happy but when contemplating His perfections. Thus are all accidents, pain, grief, disappointments, made easy; love smooths all. The Will of the Beloved is a sufficient reason why each cross should be embraced and welcomed as if it were a crown of glory, or a bed of roses.

But remember, O my soul, that in thy love there is danger; even thy holiest things are liable to the taint of thy humanity. Be care-

ful that thy love be sweet, full of tranquillity, of holy calm; subject to no gusts of passion and no lullings of tepidity. Let it, as a lamp well trimmed, burn brightly, steadily — casting a light all around, and shedding the lustre of its pure rays upon thy thoughts, thy words, thy deeds, and on these more especially in thy conduct towards thy brethren.

Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle: or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill?

Even he, that leadeth an uncorrupt life: and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart.

He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour: and hath not slandered his neighbour.

He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes: and maketh much of them that fear the Lord.

He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not: though it were to his own hindrance.

He that has not given his money upon usury: nor taken reward against the innocent.

Whoso doeth these things: shall never fall.

Monday

AFTER FIRST SUNDAY.

**BELoved, IF GOD SO LOVED US, WE OUGHT ALSO TO LOVE
ONE ANOTHER.—1 St. John, iv. 11.**

COME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspirations; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable through **JESUS CHRIST.**

“If God so loved us,” means that He evinced the very greatest possible love in sending His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. The remembrance of this inestimable benefit will inflame and increase my love to God, as I, by constant self-examination and watchfulness, discover daily more and more how greatly I stand in need of a Redeemer. This love to

God will cause me to love all those to whom God has showed His love; and in every person I behold, however poor, however wretched, I shall see one whose soul is so loved by God, that He sent His only begotten Son to redeem it from everlasting death.

This remembrance will always make me bitterly grieve to witness sin, or the effects of sin, in my neighbour; it will cause me to rejoice over those who are walking in the steep and narrow path which leadeth to eternal life.

The love to one's neighbour can never be a passive and theoretic love. Love is ever active, seeking to benefit those beloved in every possible manner. Now, acts of charity or love to my neighbour may be so many, that I must endeavour to bring them clearly before my mind, for the purpose of ascertaining how far I am in the habit of practising or leaving undone any of these most important acts. There are two sorts of charity, temporal and spiritual. The temporal acts are, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to redeem captives, to visit the sick, to entertain strangers, and to bury the dead.

These works of mercy are some of them not

likely to be required from me, others will always be of daily occurrence. And take heed, my soul, that thou turn not thy face from any poor man ; remember also always to give thine alms with the intention of doing it to God, seeing always in thy poor brother the representative of Him Who became poor for his sake and thine. These instances of temporal works of mercy are only broadly stated, and must be subdivided and carried out into various other branches.

The spiritual works of mercy are very numerous ; these are a few of them : —

To teach the ignorant ; to counsel the doubtful ; to admonish sinners, diligently, seasonably and kindly ; to encourage others to good works ; to comfort the afflicted ; to pardon offenders ; to succour and support the weak ; to pray for all estates of men, and for relief of their necessities ; to be gentle and charitable in speaking of the defects of others ; not to offend a weak brother.

In all these instances both of temporal and spiritual works of mercy, thou feelest thyself below that mark which is the standard of Christian perfection ; but thou must perceive that

the defect which is most insidious, and which creeps in almost unawares, is that of speaking unfavourably and flippantly of others ; not only in speaking of their faults, but in using disparaging language of them. Is this what ought to be the conduct of a disciple of the God Who is Love? No. I sorrowfully confess that my soul is not so entirely filled with love as becomes one for whom the Eternal Son came into the world, gave such an example of untiring and perfect love and mercy, and died such an agonizing death to free us from the curse of the law which we had broken. Oh, give me Thy love, most loving Saviour, that I may love my neighbour in Thee, and Thee for Thine own self ; and let it be in me the very bond of peace and of all perfection : grant it, Lord, I humbly beseech Thee ! *Amen.*

Tuesday

AFTER FIRST SUNDAY.

**WHOSOEVER SHALL CONFESS THAT JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD,
GOD DWELLETH IN HIM, AND HE IN GOD.**

1 St. John, iv. 15.

COME, Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspirations; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable through JESUS CHRIST.

These words suggest to me to examine my faith, lest on so important a subject I should either be led into error, or by carelessness let go any portion of that truth which is of such vital importance.

To confess a belief, means not only to pronounce the words, or to carry a bare intellec-

tual assent to the doctrine, but to make my outward actions correspond to the convictions of my mind, and thus witness to them.

The Church, in her tender care for her children, has provided a confession of our faith in the blessed and only Saviour, declaring that it is necessary to eternal salvation that we believe rightly the Incarnation of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; and going on to say that the right faith is, that we believe and confess that our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Son of GOD, is GOD and Man.

Perfect GOD and perfect Man: equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead, inferior to the Father, as touching His manhood.

My soul, this is a vast mystery, but thou must bend thy finite capacity to GOD's infinite wisdom, and meekly believe what He has so graciously revealed. This belief in Thy blessed and only Saviour must not rest here; thou must indeed believe, but what are to be the fruits of this belief?

Thou seest the eternal Son of GOD, begotten before the world, GOD of GOD, Light of Light, very GOD of very GOD, sitting at the right hand of the Father from all eternity. Thou wilt adore

the greatness of His glory, the height of His majesty. Thou seest Him descended from His Father's throne, emptied of all His glory, taking upon Him the form of a servant, being born of a poor maid, suffering all the miseries of humanity. Behold, O my soul, His humility, and become humbled thyself, after so great a Pattern.

Thou seest Him wandering about, not having where to lay His head; wearied, hungry, thirsty; yet ever labouring for the good of mankind. Adore, my soul, His patience, His long-suffering, His meekness, His mercy, His love; and endeavour to become patient, long-suffering, meek, merciful, and loving, after so great a Pattern.

Thou seest Him despised, accused, forsaken, spit upon, buffeted, scourged, crucified! Fall down and kneel before the Saviour Who died for thy sins, and endeavour to crucify the old man, with its affections and lusts; bury thy sins in His grave, and oh! endeavour to rise with Him to newness of life. How can this prospect but produce in thee such a lively faith as will indeed cause thee to purify thyself, that thou mayest become a temple fitted for the in-

dwelling of God the Holy Spirit ! LORD, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief. O LORD, my Redeemer and only Saviour JESUS CHRIST, I beseech Thee, increase my faith.

By the mystery of Thy holy Incarnation ; by Thy holy Nativity and Circumcision ; by Thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation ; by Thine Agony and bloody Sweat ; by Thy Cross and Passion ; by Thy precious Death and Burial ; by Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension ; good LORD, deliver me.

Wednesday

AFTER FIRST SUNDAY.

THERE IS NO FEAR IN LOVE; BUT PERFECT LOVE
CASTETH OUT FEAR. — 1 St. John, iv. 18.

COME, Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspirations; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable through JESUS CHRIST.

Why do I fear God? Why should I fear and shrink from the thought of seeing Him, supposing that now, even at this moment, He were to come to judge the world? I know Him to be all-merciful, most tender, most loving; yea, but I also know Him to be all-seeing, most pure, and most just. I am a sinful creature; and when I think upon God,

and love Him with all my heart, soul, and strength, though I see all His divine perfections, yet, I look upon myself, and like Adam, when he had transgressed and fallen, I see myself to be naked—naked of every good work. I therefore cannot help—I *must* fear God, because of my sinfulness, because of my imperfections; I must fear while the least spot of sin, the slightest soil, remains in me. Why do I not cast aside all imperfection? I love God, I desire to serve Him, and I would gladly arrive at that perfect love which casteth out fear. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak; and I daily have to bewail, that the good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do. I thank God, Who has provided a Propitiation for me—JESUS CHRIST the Righteous,—for without the washing out of the stains of my sins by His most precious Blood, I could not hope to be saved.

How canst thou, O my soul, cultivate the perfection of love, which casteth out fear? Thou must pray earnestly for grace to help thee on in thy warfare. The struggle gets daily more severe; the devil relaxes not his hold without many attempts to retain thee in his power.

Examine most rigidly thy conduct every day, and every day set thyself a fresh task ; go on from strength to strength, until the time shall arrive when thy warfare shall be accomplished. Then thou shalt be brought before thy Judge, thou shalt have thy garments washed in the Blood of the Lamb, thy love shall be made perfect, no fear will henceforth come near thee, but thou shalt live in the presence of Him Whom thou lovest with a perfect love, the enjoyment of Whose presence is perfection of bliss.

O LORD, give me the grace of perseverance, that I fall not away from Thee or relax in my endeavours after Thee. Uphold me, O LORD, by Thy mighty power, and grant that, loving Thee above all things, I may attain Thy gracious promises, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

Thursday

AFTER FIRST SUNDAY.

THERE WAS A CERTAIN RICH MAN, WHICH WAS CLOTHED IN PURPLE AND FINE LINEN, AND FARED SUMPTUOUSLY EVERY DAY : AND THERE WAS A CERTAIN BEGGAR NAMED LAZARUS, WHICH WAS LAID AT HIS GATE, FULL OF SORES, AND DESIRING TO BE FED WITH THE CRUMBS WHICH FELL FROM THE RICH MAN'S TABLE : MOREOVER THE DOGS CAME AND LICKED HIS SORES.— St. Luke, xvi. 19 — 21.

COME, Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspirations; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable through JESUS CHRIST.

What a contrast is here given between the rich and the poor ! The rich man, surrounded by every luxury and comfort, clothed with mag-

nificence, and fed with every dainty that could excite his appetite and minister to his enjoyment : the beggar, houseless, laid at the gate of the rich man, full of sores, and so helpless that he could not drive away the dogs which came about him; hungry he must also have been, for he desired to be fed with the leavings of the rich man's table.

There is no particular sin attributed to the rich man ; he is not blamed for being rich, nor for using his riches for his own pleasure : neither is the poor man praised for any particular virtue ; although the end shows that he possessed such virtue, though it was hidden under a miserable and disgusting exterior.

There must have been some connexion between these men, or they would not have been named together ; neither would the condition of the one have entailed such a responsibility upon the other.

God, in His providential arrangements, had so placed the poor man, that in becoming nigh to, or neighbour to the rich man, that rich man had certain duties to perform with respect to him. How did he perform those duties ? The richly clad, the well fed, the luxurious man,

allowed the miserable, the impotent, the hungry man to lie at his gate — that gate which ought to have been a type of his heart, open,—with good things passing and repassing to and fro ; and yet he ministered not to him, but left the offices of kindness to be performed by dogs ; thereby showing that brute beasts are to be preferred before the sensual, selfish man, who, though guilty of no *crime*, commonly so called, *omits* to do his duty to his neighbour. “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” The rich man fulfilled not this command, and the sequel shows that a fearful retribution awaits those who break this commandment.

My soul, think not, because thou art not rich, according to the common meaning of the word, this parable contains no warning to thee. Pause, and consider, that sins of omission are specially pointed at in this part of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. God has given thee many things richly to enjoy : is there no poor beggar at thy gate, longing to be a partaker of some of thy privileges and blessings ? Dost thou withhold any comfort from a poor brother, to whom thou mightest administer of thine abundance ?

Dost thou, for instance, go frequently to church, and dost thou forget thy () whose duties oblige him to remain at home, unless some one relieve him, and take his place? He is the beggar at thy gate; endanger not thy soul by refusing that for which he longs. Dost thou hear of a sick person to whom a short conversation, a little reading, would be an unspeakable comfort? He is the beggar at thy gate; give him that for which he asks, though it be to thy inconvenience, and thou shalt not lose thy reward. Never omit anything that may give either profit or innocent pleasure to those around thee. Kind looks, kind words, a gentle reproof, a small alms, (if no more is in thy power,) and at all events thy strength, thy time, thy talents, may be employed for those who are around thee; for each person who is brought near to thee, be it friend, sister, mother, husband, child, servant, stranger, or enemy, in turn may be the beggar at thy gate.

Grant me, O LORD, grace to discern all the duties and responsibilities with which I am surrounded; give me an entire forgetfulness of self, and a great love for the brethren around

me ; increase my charity, and my power of usefulness ; and may my conduct be such, that it may shew forth my love and my adoration of Thee by the care and zeal with which I serve my neighbour. *Amen.*

Friday

AFTER FIRST SUNDAY.

AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT THE BEGGAR DIED, AND WAS CARRIED BY THE ANGELS INTO ABRAHAM'S BOSOM: THE RICH MAN ALSO DIED, AND WAS BURIED.— St. Luke, xvi. 22.

COME, Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspiration; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable unto my heavenly LORD.

The poor man spent his life in misery; his body was diseased; his mind was however set upon things above; and when his soul ceased to inhabit its miserable tenement of flesh, as it was precious in the sight of God, He commanded the angels to carry it to its place of

rest—Abraham's bosom, there to remain until the great Day of Judgment. How sweet the repose that the soul of the poor sufferer must have enjoyed in that place of rest and refreshment, after the miserable hours spent at the gate of the rich man, where his sufferings were so great, that even dogs had pity on him and licked his sores !

But the rich man ; what a blank is here ! he died, and was buried. Here are no angels, no bosom open to receive him ; but he went to the place prepared for him, and for such as him.

My soul, thou art often exceeding heavy ; the cares of this world often press upon thee ; thou hast to provide for a family ; and thy bodily health is sometimes so impaired as to make life a burden to thee.

What a comfort under the troubles, sorrows, and distresses of this life, to think upon Abraham's bosom ; to reflect, that, if thou bear thy cross as a faithful servant of thy LORD, when thou art parted from this corruptible flesh, angels will carry thee unto Abraham's bosom, to that place of rest and refreshment, of calm and tranquillity, and of sweet repose, where thou wilt await in peace thy LORD's coming !

O how great an encouragement to bear patiently all the evils of this life, to remember the peace and joys awaiting the toil-worn soldiers of the Cross !

Remember, O my soul, when thou art tempted to repine at thy trials, remember the angels ; think on Abraham's bosom ; think on thy LORD, Who purchased these great mercies for thee ; adore thy God, Who has provided so blessed an escort, so divine a resting place, on thy way to the full enjoyment of that bliss which He has prepared for those who love Him.

LORD, I am not fit, I am not worthy of all Thy mercies. LORD, make me more thankful, more worthy ; lay any cross upon me, so that I may finally rest with Thee ; and grant me Thy grace to stand against all temptations, and to be ready to suffer all things, so that I may win CHRIST. *Amen.*

O how amiable are Thy dwellings : Thou LORD of hosts !

My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the LORD : my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house,
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her
young: even Thy altars, O LORD of hosts, my
King and my God.

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house:
they will be alway praising Thee.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in
Thee: in whose heart are Thy ways.

Who going through the vale of misery use
it for a well: and the pools are filled with
water.

They will go from strength to strength: and
unto the God of gods appeareth every one of
them in Sion.

O LORD GOD of hosts, hear my prayer:
hearken, O GOD of Jacob.

Behold, O GOD our defender: and look upon
the face of Thine Anointed.

For one day in Thy courts: is better than a
thousand.

I had rather be a door-keeper in the house
of my GOD: than to dwell in the tents of un-
godliness.

For the LORD GOD is a light and defence;
the LORD will give grace and worship, and no

good thing shall He withhold from them that
live a godly life.

O LORD GOD of hosts: blessed is the man
that putteth his trust in Thee.

Saturday

AFTER FIRST SUNDAY.

THEN HE SAID, I PRAY THEE THEREFORE, FATHER, THAT THOU Wouldest SEND HIM TO MY FATHER'S HOUSE: FOR I HAVE FIVE BRETHREN; THAT HE MAY TESTIFY UNTO THEM, LEST THEY ALSO COME INTO THIS PLACE OF TORMENT.—
St. Luke, xvii. 27, 28.

COME, Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspirations; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable unto my heavenly LORD.

The rich man being in torments, and finding no relief to his miserable condition, bitterly thinks over his past life; he calls to mind all the sins and errors he committed; he thinks of the different passages in his life in which he ought

to have acted differently; he counts over his privileges set aside, his blessings misused and abused. He then calls to mind those with whom he lived; he thinks of all, near and dear to him; and he ardently wishes that they knew of his condition; for if they did, they would repent, and not come unto that place of torments.

But no; his request is refused; those five brethren have ample means of ascertaining and knowing the truth; they have direct revelations from the Holy Spirit; and if they believe not in them, they would not be converted though a special miracle were wrought for their conversion. This sounds almost impossible; but the very case happened, and it was so—they believed not. The chief priests knew that Lazarus had been raised from the dead, and yet they consulted to rid themselves of him.

And our blessed LORD Himself, He rose from the dead; and did all believe on Him afterwards? No; they wilfully blinded themselves; and no miracle will convince those who wilfully sin in the midst of light and against the light.

How dreadful is the responsibility of those

who go on sinning against the light; and how great is the responsibility of those who, having light, neglect to impart it to those who are their brethren. It will add to the torments of the wicked to remember, that it is through their fault that their brethren are not awakened to a sense of their guilt and of their danger. My soul, remember thy brethren while there is yet time, and leave no means untried of bringing them out of darkness into light: bring all those who are near and dear to thee to the foot of the Cross, and by earnest prayer before the Throne of grace, endeavour to bring down upon them the blessing of Almighty God; and if ever this duty appear irksome or difficult, remember the rich man in the parable, whose misery was so much increased by the remembrance of his five erring brethren.

This is not enough; thou must take special heed to those who are brought near to thee by ties of blood. Thou canst not tell how far thy responsibility extends; act as if their salvation depended upon thy example, and upon thy precept. It will be fearful at the Day of Judgment to hear that a careless word, spoken by thee, has occasioned or encouraged a life of sin,

for which a soul is about to be cast into hell :
how much more, if that soul was of thine own
kindred ! Oh, get into the habit of looking
upon all persons as immortal souls, whose sal-
vation in some way depends upon thy conduct.
This will purify thy manners ; it may help thy
brethren to a place in Abraham's bosom.

Second Sunday after Trinity.

BUT WHOSO HATH THIS WORLD'S GOOD, AND SEETH HIS BROTHER HAVE NEED, AND SHUTTETH UP HIS BOWELS OF COMPASSION FROM HIM, HOW DWELLETH THE LOVE OF GOD IN HIM !—1 St. John, iii. 17.

KINDLE in my heart, O LORD, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable to Thyself.

Love is the constant theme of the beloved disciple: how tender, how touching, are his appeals for man; how sublime and elevating are his thoughts and expressions with respect to God! God is Love; he that loveth not, knoweth not God.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and hereby we perceive the love of God, because He laid down His life for us. Could I

lay down my life for any one? do I love any one sufficiently to go through the agonies and torture of a painful death for his sake? Perhaps there might be found some who love with intensity enough to lay down their lives for that beloved person. But those for whom our Lord laid down His life, are they all loving, and docile, and obedient to do all things according to His will? Speak for thyself, O my soul, art thou conformed to the perfect pattern of love and obedience set thee by Thy God? No; thou must sorrowfully confess that in many ways thou offendest. Thou must seek to improve thyself, and especially in this important matter of love. Thou must cultivate by every possible measure, by every possible sign, thy love to God, and thy love to men. Now, the poor are specially CHRIST's representatives on earth, and to them therefore thou must open more widely the portals of thine heart.

“Shutting up the bowels of compassion,” is an admirable description of the cold, suspicious, calculating manner in which thou meetest the poor who have to beg thee to minister to them of thine abundance. Avoid these manners and this feeling; let thy first impulse be one of

tenderness and compassion ; let not thy looks freeze the pitiful story of the poor beggar before it passes his lips ; but look kindly upon him, enter into his woes, feel for his sufferings, and relieve him according to his wants and thy power, and even beyond thy power ; for a meal made scanty by the devotion of a large share to a poor brother, will bring a larger blessing unto thee, than abundance of meat eaten to the sound of cries for help.

Thou must avoid in this, as in all other things, the injudicious application of thy means ; and the labour required to search into the claims of the poor, is an excellent addition to alms given in God's name and for God.

O LORD, grant that I may love all men, and do good to those in need. Let me love, not in word only, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth ; and grant that my feelings of love and compassion to my poorer brethren may be the test and sign that I am walking in the truth, and may give me greater confidence in approaching Thy throne of grace.

Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD :
he hath great delight in His commandments.

His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the faithful shall be blessed.

Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Unto the godly there ariseth up light in the darkness: he is merciful, loving, and righteous.

A good man is merciful, and lendeth: and will guide his words with discretion.

For he shall never be moved: and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

He will not be afraid of any evil tidings: for his heart standeth fast, and believeth in the **LORD**.

His heart is established, and will not shrink: until he see his desire upon his enemies.

He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the poor: and his righteousness remaineth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

The ungodly shall see it, and it shall grieve him: he shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away; the desire of the ungodly shall perish.

Monday

AFTER SECOND SUNDAY.

FOR IF OUR HEART CONDEMN US, GOD IS GREATER THAN OUR
HEART, AND KNOWETH ALL THINGS.

1 St. John, iii. 20.

KINDLE in my heart, O LORD, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

God, in His infinite care and kindness, hath planted in our bosoms a monitor to give us warning of our deeds, whether they are good or evil. This inward voice, conscience, keeps constant note of our doings, and alarms us when anything goes contrary to the known laws of God, which knowledge comes through our reason. This voice of the soul becomes louder and more distinct by practice, and consequently it

may be deadened and entirely silenced by disregard; the conscience becomes hard if it is not attended to; the sinner goes on committing iniquity; the voice is no longer heard; and unless he is awakened by some sudden conviction, by some messenger sent by God for his conversion, he becomes utterly reprobate, dead to everything but sin. God grant that it may not be so with me; God grant unto me a tender conscience, a heart easily softened and turned from error!

I find that it takes a long, very long time, to know myself. I keep a strict watch; my conscience, I fervently hope, grows more tender, for each day I discover some error, or some tendency to error, which requires watching, so that my spiritual warfare grows daily more arduous. It is like that of an army, which at first engages with the adversary far off, using large weapons to destroy masses of the enemy; and then engages hand to hand in a personal and desperate struggle, seeking to wrest the weapon from the enemy's hand, and to inflict deadly wounds upon his person. Even so in my conflict with my sins: one is overcome; another starts up, and is quelled; and then a

third, which has never been seen before, rises ; then perhaps an old sin, which I imagined had been long ago exterminated, appears again. O how wearisome is the struggle ! how hard the victory ! but the glorious, glorious prize ! how well worth is it of all, yea, and of double and treble what it can cost me. But, my soul, thou must be diligent in thy endeavours at self-knowledge ; seek into every corner of thy conscience, leave not a thought untried ; for if thou art careless and leavest one spot, one defect, there is One Who searcheth the hearts, He is greater than our hearts, He knoweth all things, and He will require a strict account of the reason why that one defect was left to spoil thy beauty.

Thou must look well that thy will is wholly bent on serving God, that thy intention is pure ; the moment thy will becomes weak, thy intention will fail, and thou canst then have no more confidence towards God ; for God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things.

O LORD, I look up to Thee, hoping for Thy mercy ; make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me ; grant that whatsoever I ask of Thee I may receive in Thy

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own good time ; and now, O God, I ask of Thee grace and strength to keep Thy commandments, and a clear spiritual perception of the working of my own soul. Grant this for the sake of Jesus, my Lord and Saviour.

Amen.

Tuesday

AFTER SECOND SUNDAY.

AND THEY ALL WITH ONE CONSENT BEGAN TO MAKE
EXCUSE.— St. Luke, xiv. 18.

KINDLE in my heart, O LORD, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

How extraordinary it appears that, when a very great privilege is held out, it is not seized upon with eagerness; but that “with one consent” we try to make excuses for holding back from what reason and Revelation both point out as conveying special advantages and blessings! I think now of the manner in which I, and many others, try to evade the performance of religious duties; not that I am unaware of the duty, and the advantage, and even of the plea-

sure of their performance. The men in the parable might consider it an honour to receive the invitation of the rich man, and they would be aware of many pleasures awaiting them at the great supper ; but they had other duties to perform, which they either preferred, or fancied would be more to their advantage than supping with this "certain man."

I am "invited" or elected to many privileges and blessings ; but I fear that my "excuses" are many for omitting, or not appreciating, those privileges and blessings. As a member of CHRIST, as one of that holy and mystical Body of which the Head has ascended up on high, do I not oftentimes defile the sacred Body by ill-regulated actions, by unrestrained thoughts, by unbridled words ? do I not often forget the presence of my blessed Head ? and when a sense of these misdeeds comes upon me, do I not make excuses, and say of each offence, "Is it not a little one ?" As a child of God, am I not often forgetful of my heavenly Father ? do I not "make excuses" for not attending at the holy services in His house ? and when I do attend, am I not often a disobedient child, and allow my thoughts to wander from the great

Object of my adoration and love? and do I not “make excuses” of various kinds, something having occurred to distract my thoughts—it is hot, or it is cold ()? And, above all, do I not make excuses sometimes when His table is made ready for all the faithful and penitent to partake of the blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood? Are there no “yokes of oxen,” no “pieces of ground,” which stand between me and the performance of the direct command of my heavenly Father?

But further, as an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, do I not allow the world to get too fast a hold upon me? Do no worldly objects stand between me and that heavenly country to which I am invited, and of which I am a citizen; if only I do not make excuses, and set up my rest here, fixing my mind on earthly things instead of pressing forward to heaven?

Take heed, O my soul, how thou excusest thyself in the most trifling fault. Much better it is to humble thyself, and confess that in many ways thou offendest, than to get into the habit of palliating or excusing small errors; for as habits always grow, unless checked and stopped, thou wilt soon find thyself making

excuses for not doing the bidding of Him Who invites thee to His heavenly feast; and thou mayest in the end say, "I pray Thee have me excused," when thou art bidden to His supper, thy own employment meantime being merely to increase thy worldly wealth, or thy temporal happiness.

Wednesday

AFTER SECOND SUNDAY.

GO OUT INTO THE HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES, AND COMPEL
THEM TO COME IN.—St. Luke, xiv. 23.

KINDLE in my heart, O LORD, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

The chosen people of God, I well know, rejected all His offers of grace,—“His own received Him not.” He then extended His invitations and messages of mercy to the Gentiles, to those living in the city; still there is room,—room for whom?—even for those whom we, in our exclusive pride and ignorance, think too degraded and too miserable for such a favour. He sends into the highways and

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hedges for those who have lived a life of sin, to the spiritually destitute, the maimed in soul, those who have been living in the highways of iniquity, and the hedges of all sin and impurity; to these, God, in His infinite mercy, sends His messenger; who, preaching the glad tidings of repentance, and faith, and mercy, compels them to come in and partake of the free, unmerited, and unrestrained gifts of God. This ought to make me very lenient and fearful of judging others. I see persons walking in careless forgetfulness of God, and apparently of all goodness; but they have souls to be saved. I must not turn in horror from the marks of sin which they carry with them, but I must regard their present condition with compassion; and I must remember that, though I have an invitation from the LORD, I may possibly be weak enough to make an excuse, and that to those persons who are now walking in the highways and hedges, God's messenger may be sent, and they may be compelled to come in. They may also be called up higher; and I, remembering with shame my scornful thought of those persons, with great confusion may begin to take the lowest room.

These thoughts should make thee very careful, O my soul, of judging and condemning others ; it must also make thee very zealous in promoting the spread of Gospel tidings in the world. All God's appointed ministers are His servants, to whom He commits His invitations to His supper. These ministers, be they bishops, priests, or deacons — be they placed in town or country, at home or abroad — are His messengers ; and on them devolves the task of going into the streets and lanes of the city, to the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, and to the highways and hedges, to compel them to come in ; that is to say, to force them to repentance, to inspire them with faith, to give them a knowledge of God, to shew them the Cross, and to draw them with cords of love to accept the gracious invitations of their God. Be very earnest, therefore, O my soul, in thy prayers for God's ministers ; they require great, yea, supernatural strength for the work in which they are engaged. Thy poor prayers are most needful ; pray for them, unworthy as thou art, as if God's blessing depended upon thy asking. Do also all that is in thy power for those en-

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gaged in foreign missions ; they are indeed gone into the highways of the earth : may God bless their labours ; may they compel all the heathens to come in !


Thursday

AFTER SECOND SUNDAY.

SO GOD SUBDUED ON THAT DAY JABIN THE KING OF CANAAN
BEFORE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.—Judges, iv. 23.

KINDLE in my heart, O LORD, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

It had been a hard-fought battle, and the captain of the defeated army fled from the face of the enemy. Tired and exhausted, he reached the tent of one who had not mingled in the fray, Heber the Kenite. Jael, the wife of Heber, welcomed the exhausted man; she bade him enter; she gave him milk; and covered him, that he might refresh his weariness by sleep. When Jael saw Sisera sleeping, and felt the possibility of ridding her people of the daring



enemy who molested them, her woman's soul became stern as that of an undaunted warrior. I may imagine that she beheld in the sleeping man the enemy of her people and of her God; and that she lifted up her heart in one brief but earnest prayer, that her weak hand might be instrumental in exterminating this deadly foe: she struck the nail into his temples, and fastened him to the ground, — so he died. Thus God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.

Let me consider this, and regard Jabin the king of Canaan, and Sisera the captain of his host, as types of all the enemies of God — of all the sins and wickedness which fight against the children of Israel, even against those elected and chosen out of the world into God's Holy Church.

This Jabin, king of Canaan, and Sisera, mightily oppressed the children of Israel; so they cried unto the LORD: even so we cry unto the LORD, being tied and bound by the chain of our sins, and we beseech Him by the pitifulness of His mercy to loose us. The children of

Israel fight against the host, and they defeat it; but the captain flies, and is still at large; he enters the tent of a woman, and is entirely subdued and killed. We may fight against the host of open enemies and subdue them; but there is one great besetting sin, which comes in unto us, and which we nourish and feed, which requires the undivided exertion of each, for himself, to kill. God has given us here an encouraging example of how even the weakest means may subdue the strongest foe; — blessed be His holy Name.

My soul, when thou art tempted to shrink from the conflict with that besetting sin, which enters into thy secret chamber — is so familiar, and even demands some sympathy from thee from the circumstances under which it comes unto thee, — remember Jael, pity it not; fetch thy weapons, seek not for a sword or spear, but use the commonest instruments, the first thing that comes to thy hand, to exterminate thy deadly foe; use them in God's name, and He will subdue for thee both thy besetting enemy, and also the whole host of the king of Canaan.

But ever remember, that it is not thine own arm that helpeth thee, but His right hand and

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His arm, and the light of His countenance, because He hath a favour unto thee. How can God have a favour unto a sinful creature like thee, O my soul? It is even because thou hast a Mediator; He makes continual intercession for thee: it is CHRIST, Who has purchased that favour; it is the Blood of the Cross that has purchased that Redemption, without which the hand would have been powerless, and the hammer and the nail could never have done their work of extermination.

Friday

AFTER SECOND SUNDAY.

CURSE YE MEROZ, SAID THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, CURSE YE BITTERLY THE INHABITANTS THEREOF ; BECAUSE THEY CAME NOT TO THE HELP OF THE LORD, TO THE HELP OF THE LORD AGAINST THE MIGHTY. — Judges, v. 23.

KINDLE in my heart, O LORD, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

Here is a fearful curse passed upon those, who, instead of bestirring themselves in the service of the LORD, were slothful ; they are not stated to have done wrong, only to have left undone what it was their duty to do. These does the angel of the LORD curse bitterly : and it appears as if they shrunk from going to the help of the LORD's cause, on ac-

count of the mighty; that is, because the enemies of the LORD were mighty. Thus they added cowardice to sloth, and truly deserved the curse which was heaped upon them.

Let me remember that the inhabitants of Meroz were individuals, each had a separate responsibility, they each and all incurred the anger of the LORD, and they were all included in one collective curse.

Let me remember, also, that when Abraham interceded with the LORD for the cities of the plain, the LORD promised to spare them for the sake of fifty, forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, ten, — for the sake of a little knot of righteous men those guilty cities would have been given to the prayers of the faithful Abraham; and we cannot doubt but that the same would have been the case with Meroz. And what ought this to teach me? As a member of a nation, I have an individual responsibility in the national acts. I must not consider myself too mean or too humble to set an example, and to do all I can, both for the morals and the religion of my country. It is a great idea, but still I am permitted to entertain it, that I can come to the help of the Lord. To help the LORD! O how

ought I to strive that I may attain such a high honour! I, a poor, weak individual, seemingly fit for nothing but to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Still, in the various duties of life, in the self-denial exhibited in the several claims and ties around me, I, the LORD's soldier, signed with His sign, always girt about with His spiritual armour, if always declaring myself on the LORD's side can ever come to the help of the LORD against His enemies.

Strengthen me, O LORD, with heavenly courage, lest the old man, the miserable flesh, and the earthly mind, not as yet fully subject to the Spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which it will be needful for me to fight, as long as I breathe in this miserable life.

Saturday

AFTER SECOND SUNDAY.

THE MOTHER OF SISERA LOOKED OUT AT A WINDOW, AND
CRIED THROUGH THE LATTICE, WHY IS HIS
CHARIOT SO LONG IN COMING !
Judges, v. 28.

KINDLE in my heart, O LORD, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

The picture here presented to the imagination is very striking. The mother of Sisera, with all a mother's anxiety for the safety of her son, and conscious that he has been engaged in a dangerous enterprise, looks out from the window for some sign of his returning chariot ; she calls from the lattice, such is her impatience to know why he is so long in returning. Her

ladies answer her, as those in suspense are wont to do, by suggesting doubts; they show that the object of the expedition was to get spoil. Amid all their anxiety they thought not, they spoke not, of higher things; their minds were set on worldly objects: such is always the case with the enemies of the LORD; and we may say with Deborah, "So let all Thine enemies perish, O LORD!"

This shews the state of mind of those who are styled by our Saviour "the children of this world;" they seek not after God, neither is God in all their thoughts. Yet how vain is all this earnestness after worldly things! The mother of Sisera, when bending over the dead body of her son, must have felt that all the goodly spoil was useless. How gladly would she have exchanged all these glittering vanities for one word of comfort, for one hope, sent from the world beyond the grave!

My soul, be warned that this world will profit thee nothing for eternity; therefore set not thy heart upon it: neither trust in uncertain riches; let not anything in this world, or of this world, be thy stay. Thou wilt say: But God has sent me all things richly to enjoy.

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True it is, that God has sent all these things for thy use; but thou art in a state of probation, and as thou usest these things, so shalt thou be judged at the Last Day. Partake and use all things as the gifts of a loving Father; but instead of loving them, love Him, the great Giver of all things. As thou growest in love to God, thou wilt lose thy relish for all things but Himself; and as heaven and heavenly objects grow more familiar to thee, thou wilt lose sight of this world; thou wilt then look for, and long after, thy Lord's appearing. Thou wilt pant to be joined in everlasting union with Him; and like the mother of Sisera, thou wilt be ever looking out and exclaiming, Why is His chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of His chariot? Even so, O blessed JESUS, grant that I may indeed, with pure heart and clear conscience, hope and long for Thy blessed appearance.

Third Sunday after Trinity.

BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY. — 1 St. Peter, v. 5.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

To be entirely covered with humility; every thought, word, and action to be overlaid and enveloped in this Christian grace; this should be the aim of all who seek to serve the LORD acceptably.

It requires the very greatest degree of self-knowledge to detect, in order to root out, all the lurking spots of pride which disfigure the soul: a good opinion of oneself seems interwoven as it were with our very nature; but I believe that as I go on increasing in self-knowledge, I shall increase in humility. I see myself so faulty in every respect; evil lurks in my best actions; and I am so prone to fall again

into errors of which I fancied myself corrected; and, above all, I am so constantly acting without entire purity of motive; that I have every reason to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But, above all, the greatest reason for deep humility is the recollection of all that our blessed Saviour did and suffered for me. Think upon Him, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ;

"But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men :

"And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."

And why did He all this? Even for my sins. Can I then take pride in anything that I do? Can I do anything but deeply humble myself, when I consider that it took all this to wipe out my sins? The greatest saints have always been the most humble: let me, after their example, and according to the great pattern of humility set me by my Saviour, cultivate this grace, and endeavour that my life and con-

versation may be modelled after so excellent an example.


Remember, O my soul, that whoso knoweth himself well, groweth more mean in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the praises of men.

How much the more thou knowest, and how much the better thou understandest, so much the more grievously shalt thou therefore be judged, unless thy life be also more holy.

It is often very profitable, to keep thee more humble, that others know and rebuke thy faults.

Endeavour constantly to perform acts of humility. When others do not treat thee as becomes thy age, character, or station, remember thy humble Saviour; when thou seest persons inferior preferred before thee, remember thy humble Saviour; always keep thyself in the back ground, and in so doing, remember thy humble Saviour; restrain thy thoughts; in comparing thyself with others, remember thy humble Saviour.

Keep thyself low; be mean in thine own eyes; beseech the LORD absolutely to dispose of thee; and be contented to have thy good things evil spoken of, thy best actions misjudged, and thy



best words misinterpreted. Suffer all this cheerfully as unto God, remembering that He resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Almighty and Everlasting God, Who, of Thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent Thy Son, our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the Cross, that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility; Mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of His patience, and also be made partakers of His Resurrection; through the same JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*


Monday

AFTER THIRD SUNDAY.

CASTING ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM; FOR HE CARETH
FOR YOU. — 1 St. Peter, v. 7.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD,
and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may
meditate profitably.

What comfortable words are these to the weary and heavy laden ! This world is full of trouble, sorrow, and anxiety, and for the most part we have to carry about a load of external cares. Sometimes these cares are changed for sorrows, sometimes for personal sufferings; sometimes it is the weight of some sin; but always there is a weight which presses most heavily — the consciousness of sins both of omission and commission. All these burthens I may cast upon the LORD, for He careth for me. But as there is one sign by which I



know that God careth for me, so there is but one place where I may ease myself of this load of care. There is One, the dearly beloved of His Father; — that One is God, but for us He became Man; for us He hung upon the Cross, and poured out His precious Blood to wash out the stains of our sins. That Blood is the sign by which I know that He careth for us; and at the foot of that Cross may I lay down my heavy, heavy load: there may I lie down myself, trusting wholly to the ineffable mercy, which has given such a rest to my soul.

O my God, it is impossible to express—I can only feel—the divine rest, the complete repose to the soul, that this blessed assurance gives. I have One that careth for me, One Who can enter into feelings which it is impossible to explain,— a Friend, to Whom I can pour out my overburthened soul when oppressed by sorrows or sins; a Physician, Who can heal the diseases of soul and body; a Father, to Whose care I can joyfully give up all the dear ones who have been so cherished upon earth; a Saviour, Who lovingly invites me to come unto Him, Who has redeemed my soul from hell, Who has washed me from my wickedness and cleansed

me from my sin, Who now sitteth at the right hand of the Father, making continual intercession for me ; a Comforter, Who sends down fresh supplies of grace, Who gives me strength for my journey, and Who will continue to me His constant aids, as long as I really and indeed cast my burthen upon the LORD.

Whatever occurs to the mind as desirable must always be desired and prayed for in the fear of God and with humility of heart ; and we must commit the whole matter of our prayer to God, with special resignation of ourselves ; and we must say : O LORD, Thou knowest what is best for us ; let this or that be done as Thou pleasest ; give what Thou wilt, and how much Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt.

Deal with me as Thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth Thee, and is most for Thine honour.

Set me where Thou wilt, and deal with me in all things just as Thou wilt.

I am in Thy hand ; turn me round, and turn me back again, which way soever Thou pleasest.

Behold, I am Thy servant, prepared for all things ; for I desire not to live unto myself but unto Thee ; and oh, that I could do it worthily and perfectly !

Tuesday

AFTER THIRD SUNDAY.

BUT THE GOD OF ALL GRACE, WHO HATH CALLED US UNTO HIS ETERNAL GLORY BY CHRIST JESUS, AFTER THAT YE HAVE SUFFERED A WHILE, MAKE YOU PERFECT, STABLISH, STRENGTHEN, SETTLE YOU.—1 St. Peter, v. 10.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

I must, then, suffer, before I attain to the privileges of the Gospel. Even so, LORD; let me not shrink from what Thou hast ordained; but give me courage to take up my cross, ever holding before me the prospect of those sufferings by which our Saviour CHRIST made us free. Let me not shrink from Thy protecting Arm; but in all my dangers and tribulations, grant that I may cling close to Thee; not desiring to see my way through my troubles, but wishing

to be guided by Thee into the safe resting place of Thy will. Thou canst do this, O God of grace; Thou hast called me unto eternal life by Thy dearly beloved Son CHRIST JESUS. Oh, let Thy grace be sufficient for me; I will rejoice in being called to suffer tribulations, if only Thou wilt, by them, bring me nearer to Thee, that I may be made perfect by the constant contemplation of Thy ineffable perfections, and may receive supplies of grace to carry me forward: oh, may I go on from strength to strength, until I appear before Thee, the God of gods, in Zion.

But how can I talk of perfection and myself together? O LORD, behold me; is it not the greatest presumption in me to talk of perfection? But behold my trust is wholly and entirely in Thee; Thou takest the simple out of the dust, and liftest the poor out of the dung-hill; Thou canst even perfect me, wretched, miserable sinner that I am. And as I am sore let and hindered in running the race set before me, owing to the troublous times in which Thou hast set my life; O stablish me in Thy holy faith; make me strong and very courageous; and settle me in the true faith, on that Rock

which Thou hast ordained for ever : then may rain descend, floods come, and winds blow ; I shall never be moved, for Thou, LORD, wilt have stablished, strengthened, settled me.

O my soul, fall down and worship thy Saviour, for having brought thee unto this state of salvation. He has purchased thy salvation ; thou knowest how dear it cost Him ; and thou knowest that He now sits on the Throne of glory, making continual intercession for thee. Let this be thy inducement to persevere ; pray without ceasing to that merciful Saviour ; and ask of Him to send down upon thee the strengthening, vivifying grace of His Holy Spirit ; to hold up thy goings in His paths ; and finally, when thy garments have been made white in His precious Blood, to place thee at His right hand, there to enjoy the pleasures of His kingdom for evermore.

Wednesday

AFTER THIRD SUNDAY.

I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT LIKEWISE JOY SHALL BE IN HEAVEN OVER ONE SINNER THAT REPENTETH, MORE THAN OVER NINETY AND NINE JUST PERSONS, WHICH NEED NO REPENTANCE. — St. Luke, xv. 7.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

Our blessed Lord is sitting in the house of a chief Pharisee. He discourses with divine wisdom, and instructs those who are willing to receive His doctrine. But the Scribes and Pharisees, blinded by their pride, perceive not, neither understand, the drift of all His words and actions. They find fault that He keeps not Himself separate from sinners. Our blessed Lord, full of meek dignity, reproves these fault-finders by pronouncing the parable of the lost

sheep; so applicable to them, so applicable in these times also. All we like sheep have gone astray; but there was once a Good Shepherd, Who came into the wilderness of this world: how tenderly and patiently did He seek those who went astray! How does He still, through His appointed messengers, seek the lost ones; how gently and tenderly does He place them on His shoulder, and carry them. He feeds them in the green pastures of His Word, and leads them forth beside the cool refreshing streams of His grace. How tenderly ought I to love this divine Shepherd; how ought I to watch over, and care for, the soul which He has carried with Him and so tenderly watched over! But what a precious thing a soul must be! There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth; the salvation of one soul causeth more rejoicing where God and the holy angels dwell in bliss and glory inconceivable, than the salvation of ninety and nine who have never departed from virtue.

My soul, thou knowest what it cost to redeem thee — even the Sacrifice of God. Oh, let this thought make thee very precious in thine own sight; thou art not thine own; thou art bought

with a price; all thy actions must be regulated with this view; thou art precious thyself; others are precious also. Act as if thy example were to save thy brother's soul; make no excuses of false humility; thy good example may do much; thy evil example is sure to hinder the salvation of others: therefore act for thyself, and to thy brethren, with the constant remembrance that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth—joy in that blest place, where it seems impossible to conceive that the happiness, the pleasure, the bliss, can be increased! Yet so it is: the angels rejoice; and God Himself so loves us, that though He has His dwelling so high, yet He regards with approbation the gathering in of His chosen into His kingdom.

LORD, grant unto me ever to think more favourably of the spiritual state of others than of my own: Thou that hearest prayer, hear me, unworthy, whenever I call upon Thee to have mercy on the souls of those with whom I have to do. Whether known or unknown, let me never pass by any one who seems particularly wretched and degraded, without praying that his soul may be precious in Thy sight. I know

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not whether that person may not cause joy in heaven ; I know not whether that soul may not be higher exalted than mine, which has had such superior advantages.



Thursday

AFTER THIRD SUNDAY.

AND THE CHILD SAMUEL GREW ON, AND WAS IN FAVOUR BOTH
WITH THE LORD, AND ALSO WITH MEN.
1 Sam. ii. 26.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD,
and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I
may meditate profitably.

The history of the birth of Samuel is fraught with instruction and comfort, both to mothers, to whom it is peculiarly suited, and also to persons in general, who cannot fail to be edified by the faith, the answer to prayer, the loan lent to the LORD, and the continual prosperity of that "loan," placed as it was beyond the reach of such care as is usually required.

Hannah earnestly desired to have children ; her tender heart yearned for one on whom it

could place its purest affection. Besides which she was taunted with having no children, and this made her fret. But Hannah had recourse to the only consolation which could await her in her trouble. She went into the Temple, and there opened her bitterness of soul to the LORD; she prayed and wept sore. Her prayer was heard; she brought forth her son; and she remembered the vow wherewith she had vowed him unto the LORD. She had been faithful in making her prayer; she was faithful in performing her vow.

Her little Samuel was the LORD's; and full of gratitude to her gracious God for His blessed gift, she made no excuses or delays in performing her promise. As soon as he was in any degree fit to be parted from her, she gave her darling child into the hands of Eli the priest.

How I marvel at the great love and faith of Hannah! She wept sore when she had no child; but when her wish was fulfilled, and she was about to part from this child of prayer and tears, did she weep sore? No; she says, "My heart rejoiceth in the LORD;" and she is inspired with divine words to praise the LORD, Who had done so marvellously for her. Her

faith and her love were rewarded; every year, when she took him a little coat, she witnessed his growth in grace, and his increase in favour with God and with man.

How faithless am I when I have this history, among others, before me, ever to hesitate or debate a moment, and not at once to place my cause in the hands of the LORD; how dull am I not to fly in every difficulty to the God Who alone doeth great wonders!

I may not have the high privilege of lending anything that I can call mine to the LORD; but I may give myself, as a living sacrifice, unto the God Who hearkens unto prayer, and will perform all my petitions. I may minister before the LORD daily, by coming unto Him duly into His courts; by approaching Him in my closet; by offering up my every action to my God; and I may hope by these means to increase in spiritual stature, and to be in favour with God and with men.

Praised be Thou, O LORD, for thus shewing me, in the lives of Thy saints, my own high calling and exceeding blessedness. Grant when I come before Thee with petitions, and make my vows in Thy sight, that I may be heard;

and enable me rigidly and strictly to render unto Thee that which I have vowed. O grant me "my Samuel" to my prayers. Grant that I may lend my most precious things unto Thee; and may "the Samuel" Thou hast graciously given me, increase in wisdom, and stature, and in Thy grace and favour.


Friday

AFTER THIRD SUNDAY.

SPEAK, LORD; FOR THY SERVANT HEARETH. —
1 Samuel, iii. 9.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD,
and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may
meditate profitably.

How often during my life has the LORD called unto me, and I have not recognized His Voice! He spake to me oftentimes in my youth, by the voice of my parents. His gracious warning then kept me from the path of danger, and installed many good principles and habits in me. But, alas! I then knew not His Voice; and I sorrowfully remember, in how many ways, and at how many different times, I neglected, and fell short, and despised, and rebelled against His voice. O that the young would be warned in time, and before they have



soiled the baptismal purity of their garments, would listen to the Voice of the LORD, and say, Speak, LORD, for Thy servant heareth! In so many ways the LORD speaks to the young, His appeals are so affecting, so awakening to the tender conscience, that it is sad so many careless and trifling ones should be found. Oh, may they turn from this, and be wholly attentive to that glorious Voice which is mighty in operation! But I am past the time of youth, and I have been, in some measure, awakened to a sense of the grace which God bestoweth without measure, and to the love and mercy of God in having elected me a member of His Body. But still let me ask myself the question, Do I, like Samuel, awake when the LORD calleth to me? do I listen to every possible indication of His blessed will? do I look, and search, every way in which God will speak to His servant? Samuel at first knew not the Voice; but when that knowledge was given him, he answered faithfully and promptly. If he had been told before hand that God would call to him, he might have expected to hear a mighty voice, great thunderings, and awful signs of the Divine Presence, as when He spoke to Moses in

the mount; and he might not have known that the still small voice, the calm tender call, "Samuel, Samuel," was the way in which the Almighty God vouchsafed to make Himself heard. Even so to me: He may speak to me in His loudest way; He does send terrible warnings sometimes; but His ordinary ways are not so. His foot-steps are not known; and if I slumber and neglect my watching, I may awake and find that the LORD has been there, and I not heard the message, or lost the blessing.

Think, O my soul, of the many ways in which the LORD speaks to thee; if thou neglectest a duty, the failure in the object at which thou aimest, is the voice of the LORD to thee; if thou art negligent in prayer, the difficulty thou experiencest when thou wouldest again be fervent is the voice of the LORD to thee; the loss of worldly goods is the voice of the LORD; the loss of dear ones is the voice of the LORD; and, my soul, thou hast sometimes been favoured with hearing the voice of the LORD, when, at the holy communion, He has given thee such sensible comforts, such high aspirations, such glorious illuminations of the Spirit,

as can only come when God Himself speaks to the soul, and gives it a foretaste of that bliss which is laid up in store for those who love Him.

To some few chosen saints, as well as to the young Samuel, the LORD has spoken in so remarkable a manner, that it was not to be mistaken; all is but a confirmation of the necessity of constant listening, and of ever saying with devout reverence, *Speak, LORD, for Thy servant heareth.*

Behold me, LORD, I am ready to hear Thee, whether Thou speakest as a tender Father to guide and encourage; whether as a Lawgiver to prohibit; whether as a merciful Saviour to deliver; whether as an Omnipotent and Just God to reprove and punish; in whatever way Thou callest to me, may I say, with as earnest intention, with as simple faith, as Thy chosen prophet, "*Speak, LORD, for Thy servant heareth.*"

Saturday

AFTER THIRD SUNDAY.

IT IS THE LORD : LET HIM DO WHAT SEEMETH HIM GOOD.
1 Samuel, iii. 18.

QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O LORD, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may now meditate profitably.

How often are these words, or words such as these, upon my lips when anything befalls me, which I in ignorance or blindness consider a misfortune. There is often a want of reality in the manner in which I use them. I do not really feel so resigned to the will of the LORD as my words import. There is danger in using such words from Holy Writ, without deeply considering their meaning, and without feeling that we are only warranted in using them under a corresponding experience, and as a true expression of the feeling of our hearts.

Eli was told of the impending ruin of his house; the curse of God upon it implied deep blame to himself, for his sons brought up by him were guilty of the most heinous sins. The announcement was made by a young child who acted as his servant. Thus every circumstance must have aggravated the distress of the venerable man, and made his simple acquiescence in the divine decree most touching: "It is the LORD: let Him do what seemeth Him good."

This simple faith and entire resignation come not when such words are merely pronounced.

Imagine, my soul, the greatest calamity that thou canst conceive hanging over thee, involving in ruin all thy dearest and nearest; canst thou sit humbly beneath the chastisement and say, It is the LORD? Imagine thyself tortured with bodily pain, or racked with mental anguish; canst thou say, It is the LORD? Thou must ponder well over these things, and lay up in the storehouse of thy mind all the results of these thoughts; that when the day of adversity comes, thou mayest bring forth such a treasure of submission to the Almighty Dis-

poser of events, as will break the strength of the chastisements, and turn thy temporal sorrow into spiritual joy.

Remember, as an encouragement to gain the virtue of resignation, remember Gethsemane; behold, a greater than Eli was there! There, bowed down to the ground, being in an agony, His face covered with a bloody sweat, falling prostrate, stretching forth His hands, behold the Man! What says He? Father, not My will, but Thine be done. What caused this dreadful agony? Thy sins, O my soul; the weight of a whole world's transgressions bowed down that gracious head, and caused the bloody sweat to pour down those sacred cheeks: it was to save thee, and all the world, that those words were uttered, Not My will, but Thine be done. Divine words, spoken by God Himself!

My soul, after this consideration, how canst thou, when thy petty trials (how infinitely small in comparison!) assail thee, but exclaim with Eli, It is the LORD; let Him do as seemeth Him good! Nay, how much more is the LORD with thee; Eli died because he had not the Ark to look upon; thou canst ever gaze upon the Cross!

Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

**FOR I RECKON THAT THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS PRESENT TIME
ARE NOT WORTHY TO BE COMPARED WITH THE GLORY
WHICH SHALL BE REVEALED IN US.
Romans, viii. 18.**

COME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

The present time,—eternal life,—what comparison is there between these? A few short years passed either in sorrow or pain, or in joy and pleasure, are soon over. The man who so lately came into the world a helpless infant, is soon stretched on his death bed, gasping out the few last mouthfuls of breath. He has run his course; he is about to enter into eternity—the vast, the unfathomable, eternity. The few brief years he has passed upon earth are to be

reviewed by the great Judge. O how paltry and insignificant now appear all the objects after which he strived, and groaned, and fretted. How worthless do all his actions appear, but those whose sole object was to obey and glorify the great LORD and Judge, Who can award either eternal happiness or misery.

These words in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans were written to encourage the primitive Christians, who had to suffer for their faith every persecution that the hardness of man's heart could devise. St. Paul knew all; and yet he confidently asserts that those sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. How true it is that this life is passing like a shadow; day after day, year after year, fly by us; anticipated pleasures are gone; dreaded occasions and times of trial are gone also. I look around; children are become men and women; the hearty, the vigorous, are become infirm and decrepid; times look dark, anxieties thicken; all warns me that man walketh in a vain show, he disquieteth himself in vain. But thou, O my soul, resolve so to live as thou wilt wish that thou hadst done when thou comest to die. Remember

that thy light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for thee a more exceeding and eternal glory; remember this, and shrink not from the trials which await thee. "The glory which shall be revealed in us," presents no precise picture to thee; thou canst not realize what such glory can be; thou canst not imagine the blissful communion of purified and glorified creatures with each other, and with the all-holy, all-pure, all-beautiful Majesty on High. Thy impurity, O my soul, cannot penetrate into this glorious prospect; but thou must rest satisfied with dwelling on the words that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things that God hath in store for them that love Him."

O LORD, the great and glorious God, grant that I may seek Thee, and love Thee for Thyself. Thou art my exceeding great reward, Oh, if I may but finally attain unto that glory which shall be revealed, I will suffer all things in this life patiently, thankfully, joyfully, if only Thyself art my reward, and I may dwell with Thee for ever.

I said, I will take heed to my ways: that I offend not in my tongue.

I will keep my mouth as it were with a bridle: while the ungodly is in my sight.

I held my tongue, and spake nothing: I kept silence, yea even from good words; but it was pain and grief to me.

My heart was hot within me, and while I was thus musing the fire kindled: and at the last I spake with my tongue;

LORD, let me know mine end, and the number of my days: that I may be certified how long I have to live.

Behold, Thou hast made my days as it were a span long: and mine age is even as nothing in respect of Thee; and verily every man living is altogether vanity.

For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain: he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.

And now, LORD, what is my hope: truly my hope is even in Thee.

Deliver me from all mine offences: and make me not a rebuke unto the foolish.

I became dumb, and opened not my mouth: for it was Thy doing.

Take Thy plague away from me: I am even consumed by the means of Thy heavy hand.

When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, Thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment: every man therefore is but vanity.

Hear my prayer, O LORD, and with Thine ears consider my calling: hold not Thy peace at my tears.

For I am a stranger with Thee: and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength: before I go hence, and be no more seen.

Monday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

FOR THE EARNEST EXPECTATION OF THE CREATURE WAITETH
FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD.

Rom. viii. 19.

COME, Holy Spirit' of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

I entered this world a wailing infant; my frail body was subject to convulsive pains; tears and cries were the only signs by which I could make my wants known to those around me; and without the tenderest care of my attendants, my weak frail body could not have supported the first burden of the flesh. But still I was a child of expectation; my parents looked forward to the time when all their

anxieties and cares would be rewarded by seeing the maturing of my strength, and hearing my first attempts at speech. So I grew on; and in my childhood and in my youth I was ever looking forward to promised joys, increased privileges, and brighter hopes, which smoothed down many of the difficulties by which my childish path was beset.

By degrees, as the mental eye opened, and the spiritual vision became clear, I was led to the contemplation of God; of the wonders of creation; the mysteries of Redemption; and then, as perfection was brought before me, I turned my eye upon myself and beheld my spiritual nakedness. I saw how my nature was corrupted; I learnt the reason why, as I still walked along the path of life, troubles and sorrows and anxieties beset my path. But though my unworthiness, my stubbornness, and my blindness were brought into full view, yet, at the same time, the blessed fact came before me, that I had received the adoption; that God Himself had vouchsafed to become my Father; and that I had only to strive, and to turn the earnest expectation of the creature for worldly joys and earthly blessings, into strivings, and

prayers, and watchings, and earnest endeavours after that holiness without which no man can see the LORD. The young are always looking forward to a beautiful and happy future; they are children of expectation, prisoners of hope; they have the image of the heavenly impressed on them; and they expect to find their dreams of joy and happiness realized in this world: but the vision they see is not of this world; they really see, with the eyes of their innocence, the brightness of the heavenly mansions; they overlook the deep gulf between them and their darling hope.

But now the world with its sorrows and cares, the flesh with its never-ending struggles, and the devil with his ceaseless attacks, have laid open the truth before me. The whole creation groaneth, and we ourselves groan within ourselves, and we have no part in this world; we yearn after a better country, and our earnest expectations are centred upon that blessed manifestation of the sons of God. O my soul, when thou art careful and troubled about many things, think upon the vanity of all earthly objects, and turn all thy energy to the attainment of that heavenly city where

thou wilt be received as a child of the King of kings ; where, with thy garments washed in the Blood of the Lamb, thou wilt be received into that ineffable bliss, of which all thy expectations, and imaginings, and longings, and yearnings, have given thee but the faintest shadow. Oh, be not faint and weary, but look still, and hope and pray that thou mayest be counted worthy of this calling, and may, at the LORD's appearing, see Him as He is, and so be like Him.


Tuesday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL, AS YOUR FATHER ALSO IS
MERCIFUL. JUDGE NOT, AND YE SHALL NOT BE JUDGED:
CONDEMN NOT, AND YE SHALL NOT BE CONDEMNED: FOR-
GIVE, AND YE SHALL BE FORGIVEN. — St. Luke, vi. 36, 37.

COME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my
soul with Thy bright beams of light; be
ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially
now in this my meditation, and make Thou it
profitable to me.

How blest we are in being reminded day by
day of some duty, some virtue, some privilege,
the contemplation of which may draw us near
“each to the other, all to God.” I am now re-
minded of some essential points of duty to my
neighbour, points which I am too liable practi-
cally to forget. I can see when others trans-
gress the laws of charity. I am shocked at the



many instances in which people talk and act, as if they had no love in their hearts. But in so doing I forget what manner of man I am myself; and I am the first to cry out, if any one comes not up to my notions of what is right and fitting in his conduct and bearing.

Our Father is merciful, yea, how merciful ! From my childhood even until now I have been in a great trespass, but He continues to pour His benefits upon me. He has not withdrawn from me the light of His countenance; and still I go on, carelessly, rather than wilfully, disregarding His precepts. Our Father is merciful, for He is willing to spare me; but I am unwilling to make allowances for others, though I know not of their hearts half the depravity I know of my own. Remembering this, seeing how much I need forgiveness, let me not think harshly of others, let me be merciful as my Father is merciful.

Judge not; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; and thou knowest not whether thou thyself wilt not be in the same condemnation. In the Last Day, if thou hast in thy life time judged thy brother, that judgment shall fall upon thee. How darest thou

therefore pass sentence upon thy brother ; thou canst not see into his heart ; thou must look to thyself, and then, if thou findest thyself without sin, thou mayest “ cast the first stone.”

It is so impossible to judge fairly of the actions of others, as thou canst not see their hearts, their circumstances, the outward inducements, the inward impulses to their actions, that thou hadst much better make a firm resolution, O my soul, never to think of or condemn the conduct of others : prune thy own words, regulate thy own thoughts, make a covenant with thine own eyes, and suspend thy judgment of others, unless thou art called upon to vindicate God’s honour by examining into their conduct. If thou must, set about the work solemnly, prayerfully, with a full determination to be merciful after thy power, and to judge, not according to appearances, but righteously. O most just Judge ! I beseech Thee to look into my heart, and send down Thy gracious Spirit to enable me to eject that insidious fault — judging of others. Thou seest, LORD, my weakness, my infirmity ; shew me the unreasonableness of my condemning others when the house of my own soul is so

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desolate and in ruins. Give me, O LORD, an enlarged charity, that I may not judge, that I may not condemn; but grant me, LORD, to be merciful even as Thou art merciful.


Wednesday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL.—St. Luke, vi. 36.

COME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

I must reflect on the necessity I continually lie under of the mercy of God, and how easy a means our LORD has prescribed for obtaining His mercy. All my good must come from God; and as I have rendered myself absolutely unworthy of any good at all by my sins, I can allege nothing for myself; but can only appeal to the Divine mercy, that He may give me the graces which I have not deserved, and forgive me the punishments I have deserved, and the sins by which I have deserved them.



Thus, finding mercy with God is all in all, and the means of finding that mercy is to shew mercy to others — forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you. O how lovely, how beautiful, how beneficent is this virtue of Mercy, both for time and eternity! How sweet are all her fruits. She is the favourite of heaven, and makes all her lovers favourites of heaven; she is the eldest daughter of the great King, Whose mercy is over all His works; she shews herself to all them that seek her; she runs to embrace all them that love her; she carries them to her Father's home, even to the mansions of a happy eternity.

Let me consider the different ways of showing mercy recommended by the Word of God.

There are two kinds of mercy to be shewn to our neighbour,—temporal, and spiritual. The temporal works of mercy are divided into, feeding and clothing the poor members of JESUS CHRIST; visiting and relieving the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned: such works as these are a sacrifice well pleasing to God; they have been done unto the poor of CHRIST, Who considers them as done unto Himself.

Secondly, Spiritual works of mercy: by assisting and relieving our neighbours in their spiritual necessities; by good counsel and instruction; by encouraging them under temptation; and especially by reclaiming them from errors and vices,—and by that means delivering their souls from the second and everlasting death, and putting them in the right way of coming to live for ever with the loving God. How acceptable to God are these spiritual works of mercy! The Son of God came down from heaven to exercise these works upon earth; in these He employed the days of His mortal life. Oh, let us be glad to follow His great example as far as our weakness will allow us.

The reward here promised to the merciful is, that they shall obtain mercy; both here and hereafter, spiritually and temporally; by having their wants redressed and their sins forgiven them, and by being received hereafter into everlasting dwellings, and finding there the fruit of all the seed of mercy here sown, multiplied to an hundred fold. Alas! how wretched shall I be if God does not shew me mercy! how happy if, by being merciful to others, I insure His mercy to myself.

Wednesday after Fourth Sunday. 231

Resolve, O my soul, to be ever merciful to thy neighbours, that thou mayest find mercy with God; for “with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again;” yea, with infinite advantage,—for good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will the good and merciful God give into your bosom. Grant, O LORD, that I may be merciful, and may obtain Thy infinite mercy.

Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy: the LORD shall deliver him in the time of trouble.

The LORD preserve him, and keep him alive, that he may be blessed upon earth: and deliver not Thou him into the will of his enemies.

The LORD comfort him, when he lieth sick upon his bed: make Thou all his bed in his sickness.

I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

Mine enemies speak evil of me: When shall he die, and his name perish?

And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: and his heart conceiveth falsehood within himself, and when he cometh forth he telleth it.

All mine enemies whisper together against me: even against me do they imagine this evil.

Let the sentence of guiltiness proceed against him: and now that he lieth, let him rise up no more.

Yea, even mine own familiar friend, whom I trusted: who did also eat of my bread, hath laid great wait for me.

But be Thou merciful unto me, O LORD: raise Thou me up again, and I shall reward them.

By this I know Thou favourest me: that mine enemy doth not triumph against me.

And when I am in my health, Thou upholdest me: and shalt set me before Thy face for ever.

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel: world without end. *Amen.*

Thursday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

FORGIVE, AND YE SHALL BE FORGIVEN.—St. Luke, vi. 37.


COME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

In many things we offend all, but our gracious and merciful LORD has given us means and ways of escaping from His most just judgment.

When I think upon what sin is, I marvel that man can ever find a place for repentance; for God is so infinitely good, that to offend Him seems the most enormous ingratitude and depravity. Alas! that so it is, that not only the wicked and profane, but even those who are good and virtuous, and have the wish to

live close to God, are continually slipping back and doing the things they would not. But God saw the difficulty that His fallen creatures were placed in, and He has provided a Propitiation for our sins: thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift! His Son JESUS CHRIST became a Sacrifice for us; He poured out His Blood and cleansed us; and is ever intreating for us at the right hand of the Father. Thus we, like the creditor, have had our debt of ten thousand talents forgiven us. He, moved in compassion, has loosed us and forgiven the whole debt. Then we go out into the world, and we meet with fellow servants, and they contract debts with us; and we forget our own debt, and we roughly demand payment; without pity and without consideration we exact the uttermost farthing. But our LORD will not have it so; we have not forgiven our brother, and therefore we shall not be forgiven ourselves.

My soul, thou canst make a closer application of this to thyself. Consider in thy intercourse with thy brethren, all that befalls thee in this matter of forgiveness. It is much easier in this, as in many other cases, to per-



form a great act, than to undergo the many trifling injuries and annoyances of daily life : but, as in other matters, so in this, attend to small things ; and if thou beginnest by forgiving, instantly and at once, him who speaks disparagingly of a much-prized quality or virtue, thou wilt find it easier to forgive the debt of him who has robbed thee of thy good name, or has deprived thee of thy dearest blessing.

But in all this matter of forgiveness, remember, and set constantly before thee, the one great Propitiation. He, Who has brought into the world this precious quality of forgiveness, He will prize thy sacrifices, for His Blood purchased thy forgiveness : He knows what it cost to redeem thee, and He will favourably look upon the struggles that thou makest to overcome the natural man, which whispers revenge and punishment ; and He will send down His Spirit to assist thee in finding out how infinitely sweet it is to “forgive the whole debt.”

Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven : and whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD im-

puteth no sin : and in whose spirit there is no guile.

For while I held my tongue : my bones consumed away through my daily complaining.

For Thy hand is heavy upon me day and night : and my moisture is like the drought in summer.

I will acknowledge my sin unto Thee : and mine unrighteousness have I not hid.

I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord : and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin.

For this shall every one that is godly make his prayer unto Thee, in a time when Thou mayest be found : but in the great waterfloods they shall not come nigh him.

Thou art a place to hide me in, Thou shalt preserve me from trouble : Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.

I will inform thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go : and I will guide thee with mine eye.

Be ye not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding : whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle, lest they fall upon thee.

Thursday after Fourth Sunday. 237

Great plagues remain for the ungodly: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD, mercy embraceth him on every side.

Be ye glad, O ye righteous, and rejoice in the LORD: and be joyful, all ye that are true of heart.

Friday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

THE DISCIPLE IS NOT ABOVE HIS MASTER : BUT EVERY ONE
THAT IS PERFECT SHALL BE AS HIS MASTER.

St. Luke, vi. 40.

COME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light ; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

To be perfect even as our Father Which is in heaven is perfect — this is the end of all the strivings for which I now walk on, sometimes rejoicing, but more often sorrowful, in this world. I am walking on, following my Master and Saviour, JESUS CHRIST : but sometimes I go as if nothing restrained me ; as if I were not conscious that I have always sin to avoid ; as if

I were above that Divine Master, Who is meek and lowly. I am full of the pride of life and of fondness for the things of this world. My Master is not so: He is meek and lowly in heart; He is poor in condition; He is humble; He giveth his cheek to the smiter, and neither strives nor cries; He goes about doing good;—while I, His unworthy follower, am proud, and dainty, and over-bearing, and think much of anything that I do for the good of others. And yet I do sincerely desire to have JESUS for my Master; and I am always striving to live more according to my Divine pattern. If I am as my Master, I shall see Him as He is; I shall be like Him. Can I entertain this hope? He was manifested to take away our sins: He hath promised, that whoso cometh to Him, He will in no wise cast him out. Through the Blood of JESUS I have a hope that my iniquity may be forgiven, my sin covered; and that through the one, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice once offered on the Cross, I may be enabled to approach the Throne of grace, calling out, God be merciful to me a sinner.

But I must be perfect, to be as my Master;

and until I am as my Master I shall not see Him as He is.

O my soul, thou art aware of thy imperfections; and thou deemest it impossible to purify thyself even as He is pure. Of thyself thou canst do nothing; but remember, that thou canst do all things through CHRIST Which strengtheneth thee. Thou art too forgetful of the all-powerful operations of the Holy Spirit: thou must earnestly pray for the assistance of that Holy Spirit. Thou must contemplate the Divine pattern set before thee; thou must hang upon every word which proceeds from His gracious lips; thou must follow in humble acquiescence the motions of His blessed will; thou must fix thine eyes upon Him; and when thy earthly pilgrimage is over, although thou wilt perceive that thou art not perfect, yet thou wilt rely entirely upon Him. He will wash thee in His most precious blood; He will give thee clean garments; thou shalt see Him as He is; thou shalt be as thy Master.

O blessed JESU, grant that I may follow on, to know Thee more perfectly. Cast me not away from Thy presence; but assist me, gracious

Friday after Fourth Sunday. 241

LORD, so to imitate the blessed steps of Thy most holy life, that I may purify myself even as Thou art pure, and daily be renewed after Thy Image, Who art my only Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

Saturday

AFTER FOURTH SUNDAY.

AND WHY BEHOLDEST THOU THE MOTE THAT IS IN THY BROTHER'S EYE, BUT PERCEIVEST NOT THE BEAM THAT IS IN THINE OWN EYE?—St. Luke vi. 41.

COME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

I am always thinking of the difficulties and temptations of my intercourse with others; I am ever willing to attribute the difficulty to the faults of others, and especially to the corruption of the world.

I believe, if I come to consider the subject maturely, that I shall find that the difficulty lies with myself; that my sins and my infirmities are the causes of most of the temptations

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of my intercourse with the world ; and that my sin-dimmed eyes are prone to distort the actions and habits of others, and to blame them for what rises entirely out of myself.

But the “mote” and the “beam” are two definite and precise objects ; I must endeavour to meditate profitably upon them ; I must suppose that some one, with whom I am in the habit of frequent intercourse, has a prominent defect ; he may be of a bad temper, or may have some fault or failing which grates against me. I unconditionally condemn that person ; I attribute his failings to want of religious principle ; of that principle I imagine myself to be possest, and I despise him, and feel myself superior to him. In this instance, is not the failing of my neighbour but a mote, in comparison with the beam of spiritual pride and self-satisfaction, which dims my vision, and prevents my seeing both the palliating circumstances in my neighbour’s case and the aggravations of my own ? There are no degrees in sin ; all sins are equally offences against God, and all equally deserve punishment ; the soul that sinneth, it shall die. But the difference seems to me to arise from the circum-

stances under which each individual is placed; of which no man can judge, but only God, Who seeth the heart: the same thing which is a beam in my eye, might be a mote in the eye of another.

Thou art inexcusable, therefore, O my soul, if thou judgest. Search out thine own sores, and turn to thy Saviour to heal them — but judge no man; and in thy intercourse with men seek not to search into their actions, bring them not into comparison with thine own; and if ever thou art tempted to do so, bring before thee thy last act of self-examination, recollect how that condemned thee, consider thy besetting sin, and place thyself the last and lowest: for verily thou knowest more evil of thyself than of any other human being; for thou knowest what thy opportunities, thy privileges, thy incitements to virtue are, and thou seest that in spite of these, thou hast a beam, a besetting sin or infirmity, which thou must cast out.

God standeth in the congregation of princes:
He is a Judge among gods.

How long will ye give wrong judgment : and accept the persons of the ungodly ?

Defend the poor and fatherless : see that such as are in need and necessity have right.

Deliver the outcast and poor : save them from the hand of the ungodly.

They will not be learned nor understand, but walk on still in darkness : all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

I have said, Ye are gods : and ye are all the children of the Most Highest.

But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

Arise, O God, and judge Thou the earth : for Thou shalt take all heathen to Thine inheritance.

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

FOR HE THAT WILL LOVE LIFE, AND SEE GOOD DAYS, LET HIM
REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL, AND HIS LIPS
THAT THEY SPEAK NO GUILT.
1 St. Pet. iii. 10.

O LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

Do I desire eternal life, and have I any wish to live as a Christian ought to live in these present days? I have that desire; and as much as lieth in me, I would order my goings in the paths of God during this present life. I am told that the tongue is a chief instrument of evil; in many things we offend all; if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect

man. Seeing therefore that the tongue is such an instrument both for good and for evil, I will consider how it comes to offend, how the offence is to be avoided, and how I must order my words, so as to become a perfect man.

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh : unless my heart is pure, my tongue will not cease from evil ; but even when the heart is right, and the thoughts pure, there is still apt to be a thoughtlessness and flippancy in the words and expressions, which, from its evil tendency, cannot fail to be accounted a grievous sin.

This carelessness of words is the greatest snare, or at least the most common, which ordinary intercourse with the world seems to involve. Conventional phrases, harmless in themselves, are used to shield us from inconvenience or censure ; then we are hurried on to joke or talk lightly of things that ought to be treated with respect and reverence ; and in every way there is a want of recollection, which betokens that God is not in all our thoughts.

This defect seems to be of very difficult correction ; because, when we have got our tongue so far under control that ordinary conversation

tempts not, we again err when, under the influence of excitement, we for the time lose the mastery over ourselves.

This, therefore, is a matter for serious and constant self-examination ; in no other way can we hope to put so effectual a restraint upon our tongues, as by the frequent detection of, and consequent penitence for, so grievous an error.

My soul, this is a subject over which, for long, thou hast had to lament and to weep ; thou art most guilty in this way ; and thou feelest the snare, because when thou hast most erred the world has most applauded. Resolve to put a severe guard over thy tongue, that thou speak not too much ; that thou exaggerate not ; that thou art not insincere, or unreal ; that thou jest not on things not convenient ; that thou speak no lies, nor flatter thy neighbour, nor slander thy neighbour ; that thou equivocate not.

These things thou must specially be careful of, and endeavour to keep alive in thee a sense of the presence of God, which will restrain, not thy tongue only, but thy thoughts.

Thou, O gracious Saviour, Who art my example and pattern in all things, be with me in

my endeavours to curb my tongue : Thou, Who didst pray for Thine enemies, Who didst commend Thy mother to the care of Thy disciple John, Who didst declare Thy humanity by saying, "I thirst," Who didst call, as forsaken, to Thy Father, Who didst commend Thy spirit into Thy Father's hand's ; Thou, Whose seven last words give me a never ending source of meditation ; grant that, remembering how Thou didst so sanctify words, I may learn to count the words of my lips as sanctified by Thee, and may take heed that I offend not in my tongue.

Monday

AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE OVER THE RIGHTEOUS, AND
HIS EARS ARE OPEN UNTO THEIR PRAYERS; BUT THE
FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THEM THAT
DO EVIL. — 1 St. Peter, iii. 12.

O LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

Here is another inducement to forsake evil ways, and follow those that are good. How stupid and ignorant are those who prefer darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil! How stupid have I often been, and doubly sinful, because, not being ignorant of God's ways, I have not clung closely to them,

but have suffered myself to be led away into vanity. The eyes of the LORD are over the righteous: let me consider the tenderness and Fatherly care of our gracious God, Who is ever watching over those who seek to be His truly and entirely. He keeps them in all their goings, He suffers not their footsteps to slide, but He gently leads them into the green pastures of His holy ways and beside the still waters, He giveth them of the refreshing streams of His grace. Yea, though troubles, sickness, terrors, evil times, befall them; though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they will fear no evil; for He is with them, His rod and His staff, they comfort them. O blessed providence of our God! How faithless is it to repine or be afraid, when I am convinced that His eyes are ever upon me, watching me; His arms round me, keeping me from all evil; and His ears open to my prayers! He heareth the righteous when they call upon Him, and He giveth them all their desire. The righteous only desire to do His will, and, therefore, though from the weakness of our mortal nature we ask feebly, and often amiss, yet the LORD answers the *spirit* of those prayers, and

gives what in His Omniscience is best for them. The face of the LORD is against them that do evil. Against them ! O LORD, how terrible is this ! How could I bear to see the gracious face of my God turned from me ! Resolve, therefore, more and more steadfastly, O my soul, to forsake every evil way, and cling to that which is good ; beseech thy God to turn His face from thy sins, and blot out thy misdeeds, to give thee a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within thee. Go to thy Saviour, to JESUS, and beseech Him to give thee an interest in that precious Blood-shedding which alone can blot out thy many sins. O LORD my Saviour, turn Thy gracious eyes upon me, as Thou didst upon Peter in the hall ; watch over me, O Saviour, and let Thy preventing care keep me from all evil. Into Thy hands I commend myself, O LORD God of truth. Shew the light of Thy countenance upon me ; hearken when I call, O God of my righteousness ! *Amen.*

Tuesday
AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

MASTER, WE HAVE TOILED ALL THE NIGHT, AND HAVE TAKEN
NOTHING: NEVERTHELESS AT THY WORD I WILL
LET DOWN THE NET. — St. Luke, v. 5.

O LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

Our blessed LORD stands by the lake of Gennesareth: behold the people crowd round Him, to hear the gracious words which issue from His lips, and to partake of the benefit of His various kinds of cures. Who can depart from the blessed JESUS, while they can listen to His words? To see His face, to have the slightest indication of His presence, is

enough; we linger near, and gaze upon the God of our adoration with love and awe, and we press upon Him to hear the word of God. There are the ships near, the fishermen are gone out and are mending their nets.

A ship is ever the type of the Church: our LORD enters alone, He separates from the world, "thrusts a little from the land," and teaches the people out of the ship. Even so now, gracious LORD, from Thy Church Thou teachest the people who press about Thee: how mercifully dost Thou instruct them, leading them on through the yearly round of faith and practice; each day, each week, brings its accustomed and ordered round of prayer and praise; each holy season leads on by its praises, or by the humiliation appointed in its proper course, to the contemplation and adoration of the FATHER the Creator, the SON the Redeemer, the HOLY GHOST the Sanctifier: but our lives answer not to this constant round of duties daily performed; we exclaim with Peter, "LORD, I have toiled all day, and taken nothing."

Dost thou say this, O my soul? Yea, my heart sinks to think of the toil, the labour, that it takes, to value as they ought to be valued

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the privileges which, as a member of CHRIST'S Church, I enjoy; of the small amount of personal holiness I have attained: well may I exclaim with Peter, "LORD, I have toiled all night, and taken nothing!" Get thee to thy Saviour, fall down before Him, beseech Him to enter into thy ship, obey His gracious commands to the very letter, try once more, let down thy net — and be sure that He, thy JESUS, thy GOD, will give thee those good things of the Spirit which thou desirest.

O LORD, my spiritual fishing is indeed a toil; I labour, I try in vain; but Thou wilt specially interfere for me. Grant me, LORD, the spirit of perseverance, that after every discouragement I may again let down my net; and grant, O gracious LORD, that I may enclose therein such a multitude of graces and spiritual privileges, as may carry me on and furnish me with Thy sustenance until my life's end.

Wednesday

AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

FEAR NOT; FROM HENCEFORTH THOU SHALT CATCH
MEN. — St. Luke, v. 10.

O LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

The object of this miracle was, no doubt, to shew to Peter and those who were with him, the object for which they were called: "to catch men." This is what the apostles were appointed by God's providence to do, when their LORD and Saviour sent them to teach all nations, giving them the gracious promise of being "with them until the end of the world." This promise, as the end of the world is not

yet come, is still being fulfilled, and I see in the ordained ministers of God's holy Word and Sacraments, the successors of the apostles, to whom this promise has descended.

To catch men, therefore, is the appointed task of God's ministers, whether they be bishops, priests, or deacons. This ought to give them a great dignity in my eyes; and I ought to assist them, as much as lies in my feeble power, by my prayers, and by putting all those who are in any way guided by me, in the way of being caught into that net, which will draw them to the shores of the heavenly country.

The apostle St. Peter was afraid, when he saw the miracle, and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O LORD;" and the LORD said, "Fear not." This ought to be a great comfort to me, inasmuch as I cannot but know that human nature is prone to evil, and that even God's ministers are "sinful men;" yet this by no means destroys their mission, but rather gives me occasion to bless God, for bringing good to my soul out of what is in itself evil.

JESUS Himself is with those who are duly appointed to preach His gospel, when minis-

tering in their office; JESUS commands them to let down their net; and it is the power of God our Saviour alone that blesses the endeavour, by bringing into the net such as shall be saved. What great need, therefore, is there that the spiritual fisherman should have the fervent prayers of the people, that God will bless his ministry; for to catch men is to bring them out of the deep waters of sin,—to take them out of darkness, and to bring them into the glorious light of the Gospel: and when the Spirit of God has so stirred up the soul of a sinner by the words of His ministering servant, that there is a desire clearly manifested of being drawn out of the deep waters, and brought to the shore of salvation, in the light of Divine grace; when the minister witnesses that conversion, sees the success which has attended the letting down his net,—is it not likely that his own weakness and sinfulness, his own deep poverty and insufficiency in such a work, will flash upon him, and that he will exclaim with St. Peter, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O LORD.”

O LORD, let my love and reverence for Thy

faithful ministers increase and deepen, as I awaken to a sense of their high office and deep responsibility; as I see their anxious charges, and the number of souls who are wandering about, who have never been caught and put into Thy net. Let me sympathize in their toils and anxieties, and let me never omit to lend them such aid as I can offer. O LORD, help me to pray to Thee rightly at all times for these Thy chosen servants; and do Thou, gracious Saviour, when they are overwhelmed with the greatness of their charge and of their toil, whisper to them those words of comfort, "Fear not."

Thursday

AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

THEY FORSOOK ALL, AND FOLLOWED HIM.

St. Luke, v. 11.

O LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

The disciples, when they saw by His miracles that JESUS was the CHRIST, the Son of God, forsook all — their worldly calling and means of support, their relatives and friends — and followed Him. Then they became for the first time His disciples truly; for our LORD says, "No man can serve two masters," and if they had entered into their LORD's service with a divided heart, He would not have accepted

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them. He says, "My son, give Me thine heart;" He must have the whole heart, or the service is not acceptable; for what can be done well, when the mind is distracted into various channels?

Our LORD's disciples "forsook all:" I am a disciple, a sworn soldier and servant of the LORD's; and have I forsaken all, to give undivided allegiance to the LORD GOD of my salvation?

If I am a disciple of CHRIST, I must be a Christian indeed; and if I desire to secure that happy eternity with the living GOD, which is promised to CHRIST's true and faithful followers, I must renounce all things, however near and dear to me, in order that I may follow Him. By renouncing, I mean that I must transfer all my best hopes and affections from worldly objects, and fix them upon GOD. I must give up all, that I may find all; and must be disengaged from the creature, that I may find the Creator.

Consider these things, O my soul, and sit down deliberately to count the cost; recollect at what thou art aiming, and see the price that it will have to be purchased at. Thou art

hoping to attain unto everlasting rest and peace in the heavenly kingdom, there to dwell in the presence of God the Blessed and Glorious TRINITY, with the assembly and Church of the first-born, and with the spirits of just men made perfect. For this glorious object thou must forsake all — leave all carnal and earthly affections, and follow our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, through Whose mediation and intercession alone thou canst attain to it.

Thou art surrounded by earthly ties, my soul; thou art more or less involved and engaged in many worldly pursuits, which are not in the direct line of thy duty; and thou art often engaged in worldly pleasures from preference, not from their being forced on thee as a duty.

For the last, renounce all; let not thy heart be mixed up in any worldly pleasure, or in any worldly duty, excepting so far as it is thy duty, the due performance of which will be pleasing unto God. For worldly ties, such as father, child, friend,—though at first it may seem that such relations may stay the heart from God, yet it is not so; thou mayest still “forsake all.” Consider what are thy duties with res-

pect to thy several relations : for instance, as a father ; let not thy personal feelings affect thy duty to thy child ; let nothing of self come between thy duty and thy actions ; correct, rebuke, exhort ; renounce thyself, thy own feelings ; and thou wilt follow thy LORD. Nay, more ; thou wilt not only forsake all and follow Him, but thou wilt lead thy dear ones also by the hand unto that precious Saviour, Who stood by the lake, even the waters of thy Baptism ; Who entered into the ship, that holy Church from whence He teaches the people ; and Who is constantly working such miracles of mercy, in bringing multitudes into His net ; and Who wills that we forsake all, and follow Him.

Grant, merciful Saviour and most loving LORD, that I may clearly discern, by the light of Thy Holy Spirit, the way in which I ought to leave all and follow Thee. O let nothing bind me down to earth ; but grant that the longer I live the closer I may follow Thy steps, and may finally rest with Thee, where I shall receive life everlasting.

Friday

AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

BEHOLD, TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE, AND TO
HEARKEN THAN THE FAT OF RAMS.

1 Samuel, xv. 22.

O LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

Saul, by the command of God, was to go out and smite Amalek and utterly destroy it, and all that was in it. Saul went; he smote the Amalekites; but, instead of destroying everything, he spared Agag the king, and the best of the cattle. This act of disobedience was very displeasing unto God; and for it He punished Saul, by taking his kingdom from him, and by

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reproving him by the mouth of Samuel the prophet. Sacrifice, without the entire obedience of faith, becomes superstition; and the fat of rams, the most costly offerings, are not accepted from those who wait not and watch not for the LORD.

The virtue of obedience is that which teaches us to embrace and perform willingly whatever is commanded by a superior. I may consider how great a virtue it is in the sight of the LORD, seeing that He selected it as the one by which to exercise our first parents on their entrance upon the enjoyment of their earthly paradise. What a train of events depended upon their obedience or disobedience; how miserably they fell; and what miseries has that fall brought upon us! After this consideration, think upon all those who have been pleasing to God on account of their obedience: Abraham, whose obedience was taken instead of the sacrifice of his son, his only son Isaac:—but think rather, on that One, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and became obedient, even unto the death of the Cross: think upon the obedience of that blessed Saviour, of that Pattern which I am to

endeavour humbly to follow: He obeyed the Law; He was subject unto His parents; He declared it to be His meat to do the will of Him that sent Him, and He said, "Father, not My will, but Thine, be done!" Shall not this great example of God Himself, inspire me with the ardent desire of living and dying in holy obedience?

My soul, consider thy sins; God commands thee to go out and do battle against them, and utterly to destroy them: dost thou obey? Hast thou an Agag, a splendid and enticing sin, which thou wishest to pursue? hast thou any foibles cloaked in the garb of virtue? hast thou that bosom sin, laid up, hidden from all eyes? hast thou acts of devotion, which, permitted to others, are under the circumstances in which thou art placed, not to be performed? No, my soul; flatter not thyself that any offering will be taken instead of obedience, absolute, simple obedience. Give up thy darling project, else God will reject thee from being His servant.

Thy love of independence, my soul, must be rooted out. Is it not the seat of pride, the origin of self-love, the source of all the worst passions?

But holy obedience casts out all these ; and by forcing every thought, every act, into submission to the will and law of God, and to the command of all who are His representatives, it exterminates self-will, and at last presents the whole self, a living sacrifice unto God.

O my soul, think on the sweet peace and calm of a heart wholly resigned to the will of the LORD ; even the daily occurrences of life are sanctified by being performed and submitted to, in accordance with the precepts of the Most High. Here, then, is peace and rest ; oh, embrace it, my soul ; it renders this vale of misery a springing well, and leads to the Fountain-head of bliss hereafter.

O LORD, show me Thy ways, and teach me Thy paths ; give me the grace of obedience ; that, having once been set by Thy blessed Spirit on the path which leads to eternal life, I may never forsake it, but may walk close by Thee, obeying Thy will, keeping Thy commandments, and walking in Thy fear all the day long.

Saturday

AFTER FIFTH SUNDAY.

THOU COMEST TO ME WITH A SWORD, AND WITH A SPEAR, AND WITH A SHIELD : BUT I COME TO THEE IN THE NAME OF THE LORD OF HOSTS, THE GOD OF THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL, WHOM THOU HAST DEFIED. — 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

O LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier ! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

I see before me two hostile armies, abiding on two hills opposite the one to the other ; a fertile valley runs between them, and contrasts its rural beauty with the martial sights and sounds of the two camps. There is a profound stillness reigning among the armed warriors ; but suddenly there issues from one of the camps

a huge man of gigantic proportions, completely covered with armour, and holding in his hand a massive spear. He advances across the valley to the opposite camp, and he cries with a loud voice, and defies the armies of Israel, and speaks great swelling words against the Most High. From the opposite camp comes forth no mighty warrior; the air rings not with the counter-defiance of the champion of Israel; but there appears a young man, clad in simple shepherd's raiment, fair to look upon, and ruddy. He carries no sword; he trusts not in his bow; but he answers the insolent menace of the Philistine by professing his sure trust in the God of his salvation: "I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of hosts." Then, uttering words of sure trust and confidence in the God of Israel, he puts his stone in the sling; he slings it; and the stone sinks into the forehead of that monstrous man: he falls with his face to the earth. David runs to him, takes from him his sword, and cuts off the Philistine's head.

I may see in this Philistine a type of any great sin or temptation, that either besets a whole people or an individual. Sins are all

enemies of the LORD of hosts, and defy His power, as did Goliath of Gath. Now, I see that to run away from such sin or temptation, to avoid coming in contact with it, is not to overcome it. David was a youth, not come to his full strength; he could not wear armour, but, nevertheless, he boldly advanced with such weapons as he had been in the habit of using, and, putting all his trust in God, leaning entirely on the LORD of hosts for strength, he overcame his enemy.

In thy course, O my soul, thou must be prepared to meet sometimes with some great temptation to sin. Thou art weak; nevertheless forget not thy confidence in God. He will support thee in thy struggle. Thou seest the giant advancing, strengthen thyself with much inward prayer, and go forth; but inasmuch as thou hast not proved the usual defences of argument, and learning, and subtle reasonings, thou must take against thy adversary the simple weapons thou art in the habit of using; of prayer, of silence if thou art attacked, of kindness if thou art abused, of simple assertion of the truth if the truth is assailed; and, above all, take the strong weapon of innocence,

of purity of intention, and of simple faith :
thou wilt then overcome thine enemy, and
when he falls, thou wilt despatch him with his
own weapon.

O LORD, Who to the prayer of Thy servant
David didst grant the overthrow of his enemy,
grant unto me a sure trust and confidence in
Thy mighty power, that in all assaults of my
enemies I may triumph and overcome, even by
using such weapons as are not carnal, but
mighty through Thee to the pulling down of
strongholds ; and bring, I beseech Thee, my
every thought into subjection, that I may be
wholly Thine in CHRIST JESUS our LORD.

Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

KNOW YE NOT, THAT SO MANY OF US AS WERE BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST WERE BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH ! THEREFORE WE ARE BURIED WITH HIM BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH. — Rom. vi. 3, 4.

IF I stand not by the Cross, I am lost ; if I for an instant lose sight of Him, Who there poured out His soul unto death, I am as one who has wandered out of the way in the wilderness. But I will hold me fast by JESUS, Who died Himself, and was buried in the flesh, like as I, at my Baptism, died and was buried to sin. How awful is the thought of the nearness of my union with the death of the ever-blessed Son of God ! how mysterious is the connexion between His death on the Cross and rising from the dead, with my death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness.

I see my Saviour nailed to the cruel Cross ;
I behold the blood pouring from each wound ;

I think upon my sins, the occasion of that bitter suffering; I lament and weep that nothing but the Sacrifice of the Son of God made Man could atone for the heinousness of my offences. I follow the faithful servants of the dead Saviour: they bear His Body to the burial; I see Him laid in the tomb; I lift myself up in agony towards the offended Majesty on High; I cry unto Him, and say, LORD, it is finished! oh, take away my sins, blot out all my misdeeds, bury them in this the tomb of Thy dear Son, the Lamb without blemish and without spot; and grant that as I have been baptized into this death, I may also be raised into the life of righteousness, through this my crucified, my adored Saviour.

My soul, death was thy portion; death has redeemed thee; death must be thy constant contemplation and study. Thou must die daily; thou must crucify the old man with his affections and lusts; thou must be buried with CHRIST here, if thou wouldst live with CHRIST hereafter. Let thy life be a constant death: die to the world, that thou mayest live innocently in the world; die to every affection of this earth, that thou mayest sanctify thy

dearest relations, by loving them with and by the love of God; die to sin, to thy besetting sin (), to every approach to sin. Bury all with CHRIST, nail thyself to His Cross, bathe thyself in His precious Blood; and then thy death will cause thee to possess a more abundant life, and health, and vigour. Thou mayest then hope for, and share in, that joyful resurrection, when He, the Lamb Which was slain, shall stand to receive His chosen servants, as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Grant, O LORD, that as we are baptized into the death of Thy blessed Son our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, so by continually mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him; and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection, for His merits, Who died and was buried and rose again for us, Thy Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord.
Amen.

Monday

AFTER SIXTH SUNDAY.

THAT LIKE AS CHRIST WAS RAISED UP FROM THE DEAD BY
THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, EVEN SO WE ALSO
SHOULD WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE.


Romans, vi. 4.

HERE again I see my own life placed in connexion with the life of CHRIST. He, the blessed Saviour, was raised up from the dead, death had no more dominion over Him; so, if I have buried my sins in His grave, I shall rise unto newness of life. I have the power given me, through the merits of the death of CHRIST, to die unto sin; and I have power given me, by the Resurrection of CHRIST, and through the power of the Holy Ghost, to walk in newness of life.

The change wrought in me must be as complete as that effected in a body buried, refashioned, and raised again; it must be an

entire new creature. This mighty work goes on for the most part gradually : as I see a little child daily advancing and acquiring fresh knowledge and new ideas ; so the soul, having been raised with CHRIST, puts on, by degrees, according to its own efforts, and according to the measure of grace granted to its prayers, the whole armour of God, — until at last it steps forth, arrayed in that heavenly panoply, which will effectually turn aside all the darts of the enemy. The Christian then walks on, brightening and polishing the armour, which is of so exquisite a lustre as to be easily dimmed ; but see the care and pains and watchfulness he bestows upon it ! — he walks on, and is finally received into those blest abodes, where alone he can keep himself entirely pure, and free from blemish or spot.

My soul, think upon the words, “newness of life,” and consider how entirely the old man must be put off : think of the pleasures, the riches, the honours of the world ; these belong not to the new life. Consider thy thoughts, thy proneness to evil in all thy actions, in all thy words, and in thy motives ; think upon the worldly way in which thou regardest the ob-



jects of thy affection, how much thou thinkest of their temporal welfare, how little of their spiritual! — all these things belong to the old man. But put thou on, O my soul, the new man, put on Jesus; follow Him; study all the points of His most pure and holy life, that thou mayest endeavour to imitate so bright a Pattern; and though thou must often fail and fall away, yet persevere, and continue earnest in prayer to God that He will vouchsafe thee grace to assist thee in thy endeavours. Fix thy thoughts daily upon the death of Jesus, and beseech Him, Who hung for thee on the Cross, to blot out the handwriting of transgression that is against thee, and nail it to that Cross; and beseech Him daily also to raise thee up in this present time from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that hereafter at the general resurrection thou mayest be raised to life eternal.

Unite me to Thee, O blessed Saviour: the longer I live, the more I see how fruitless my life is without Thee. Oh, grant that I may truly and indeed realize the great fact of my dependance on Thy death for the doing away my sins, and of the instrumentality of Thy Resur-

rection in bringing me to the life hid with Thee in God; and evermore grant to me to persevere in following Thee, my gracious Saviour, my joy, my crown, my all! *Amen.*

Tuesday

AFTER SIXTH SUNDAY.

FOR IN THAT HE DIED, HE DIED UNTO SIN ONCE: BUT
IN THAT HE LIVETH, HE LIVETH UNTO
GOD. — *Romans, vi. 10.*

HOW awful is the consideration of sin ; the transgression of the laws, commands, and wishes of an infinitely wise, an infinitely just, an infinitely loving God ! He commanded our first parents to abstain from eating of the fruit of one particular tree ; intimating, by the simplicity of the prohibition, that sin consists not in the nature and extent of the command transgressed, but in the simple fact of the transgression itself. That Adam and Eve dared, or felt inclined, to disobey God's commands, seems extraordinary to us ; but we do the very same—nay, more ; for we have full and perfect knowledge of all the consequences of sin ; we have longer experience of the tender

mercies and sufferings of our God; we have seen the Seed of the woman break the serpent's head. The stain of that foul sin has been done away. By man came death; by Man came also the resurrection from the dead. But by what Man? Who could satisfy the penalty so justly incurred by such disobedience? Who could take upon him the awful burthen of satisfying Divine wrath for the sins—the mighty, the awful sins of the whole world—but God Himself? Yea, it was God, Who became Man, to take upon Him the iniquity of us all. He, the holy, the sinless, was numbered with transgressors, and took upon Him all our sins; and He expiated them by such agonies, such tortures, such direful woes, as make me weep to think upon. But more, it was my deserts for which He suffered; I contributed my share to those dying pangs; my misdeeds caused that bitterest cry! O dreadful, cursed sin, that caused those sufferings of the Sinless! Oh, may my hatred of sin increase as I contemplate its dreadful consequences! He died unto sin once; it is finished; the Sacrifice is completed, the Victim is offered. He is gone up into heaven; there He ever liveth with

GOD; there He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, very GOD of very GOD; there He sitteth to make continual intercession for us. He pleadeth with the Father, in virtue of that blessed Sacrifice offered for us. The dreadful consequences of relapsing into sin, having been once cleansed from it — of crucifying the LORD afresh, I cannot estimate. O LORD, keep me from so unspeakable a sin.

O my soul, meditate upon thy blessed Saviour sitting on His throne in heaven; worship thy glorified Master, beseeching Him that He, having accomplished the work of Redemption, and being freed from the dominion of death, may keep thee pure and undefiled from sin, and inspire thee with a horror of its vileness and deformity; that so thou mayest be kept, by the power of the HOLY GHOST, free from all its temptations and allurements; and mayest so look for the second coming of thy LORD that, when He appears, He may bring thee unto those heavenly mansions which are prepared for those who love Him.

Wednesday

AFTER SIXTH SUNDAY.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL ; AND WHOSOEVER SHALL KILL SHALL
BE IN DANGER OF THE JUDGMENT.

St. Matthew, v. 21.

I may perhaps imagine that such a sentence is not applicable to me, and is only meant for such as by their profession, or by their passions, are placed in the way of committing the crime of murder. But every thing contained in the Scripture is written for our learning ; and if I read the twenty-second verse, and see the same principle carried out into its very beginnings, I may perceive that I may be guilty even of the crime of which I think there is no possibility of my becoming culpable. "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause," and whosoever so lets his anger get the better of him as to be betrayed into using bitter words, is guilty of a crime which, if indulged in, may

end in his becoming a murderer. Let me be very careful in my self-examination, lest I entertain any feelings of hatred, envy, or malice, against any one. O blessed Spirit, chase and drive away all such evil dispositions from me, lest I be excluded from a portion in eternal life,—to which murderers have no title.

How strict a watch have we to keep against the evil one! A word of scorn and contempt (*Raca*)—a word of bitterness and anger (thou fool)—betokens that there is an evil seed within, which, if not extirpated, may bring forth the evil spirit of murder. My heart must be restrained from entertaining the passion of anger: and much more must I prevent my wrath from breaking forth into words of bitterness or contempt which might rob my neighbour of peace—of honour, or, as may too likely happen, deprive him of the grace of God by provoking him to passion and sin.

O my soul, meditate seriously upon this, for thou art too prone to use hasty words when thou art stirred to anger. Think not of the justice of thy cause, nor of the guilt of him who provoked thee; but think of thy peril, and be not guilty of so awful a crime. Remem-

ber thy last things, and let enmity cease. Remember the fear of God, and be not angry with thy neighbour. Refrain from strife, and thou shalt diminish thy sins.

O my Saviour, grant that, by Thy example I may learn to suffer in my person, in dishonour, and in my worldly goods, rather than, by seeking revenge, endanger the loss of my soul, by losing Thee, my ever-blessed Redeemer, and Thy upholding and strengthening grace.

Thursday

AFTER SIXTH SUNDAY.

THEREFORE IF THOU BRING THY GIFT TO THE ALTAR, AND THERE REMEMBEREST THAT THY BROTHER HATH OUGHT AGAINST THEE; LEAVE THERE THY GIFT BEFORE THE ALTAR, AND GO THY WAY; FIRST BE RECONCILED TO THY BROTHER, AND THEN COME AND OFFER THY GIFT.— St. Matthew, v. 23, 24.

GOD will accept of nothing at my hands, if I am burdened with debt of any kind to my neighbour. This conviction ought to impress upon my mind the duty of restitution, and the necessity of looking well to my way, whether my neighbour hath ought against me. There are other debts besides debts of money, and some of these press heavily on the soul, and prevent its ascent to God.

I may not be guilty of the grosser acts of robbery of my neighbour; I may not have taken his ewe lamb, nor deprived him of his

means of obtaining his living, nor grossly slandered and taken away his good name; but I may have withheld what was his due, I may have attributed ill motives, or I may have accused him of faults, or I may have not given alms, or I may have given him no credit for good intentions: in all these, and in many more ways, I may have injured him in thought or word; and for all these I ought to make restitution, according to the several circumstances I ought to seek to make restitution and reparation to my neighbour, with a view not only to his good, but for the clearing and purifying of my own conscience, making it fit to appear before the LORD. Another way or department of this same act of restitution, is the entertaining and shewing proper gratitude and thankfulness for acts of kindness either intended or performed for me, and to make suitable returns of love to those who love me. All these things have to be weighed and set right, before I can venture to present my whole self—body, soul and spirit—as a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto God.

It makes thy task of self-examination no easy one, O my soul, when thou hast to search into

all these particulars; but thou must consider the Price which was given for thee. Consider thy value, and hesitate not to spend thy utmost strength in keeping that which is committed unto thee; which it took the Blood of that one, full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice to redeem. Thou approachest the altar, there to continue a remembrance of that Sacrifice of our blessed Saviour, and to partake of what becomes to the faithful His Body and Blood. Consider first whether thy brother hath ought against thee. If he has, go thy way; clear thyself of that debt, and then mayest thou cast thyself before the altar of thy God: thou mayest throw thyself at the feet of thy Saviour, and say, Behold me, LORD! I offer myself unto Thee; I beg to be wholly Thine; grant me the help of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may so purify my soul as to fit it to be presented holy, acceptable unto Thee. Grant that I may never sin against Thee by ceasing to pray for my neighbour, or by withholding from him his due; but make me very careful to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before Thee, my gracious God, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

Friday

AFTER SIXTH SUNDAY.

AND DAVID SAID UNTO NATHAN, I HAVE SINNED AGAINST
THE LORD. — 2 Samuel, xii. 13.

I CONSIDER the aged prophet sent to rebuke King David for his sin in the matter of Bathsheba. Nathan speaks the parable of the ewe lamb; but the king is not touched; his anger is kindled against the oppressor, but he sees not his own fearful sin in the parable. Nathan stops his threat of vengeance against the offender by gravely saying, "Thou art the man," and then denounces a fearful judgment against David and his house on account of the adulterous crimes and tyrannical oppression of which he had been guilty.

David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. He saw at once his sin, and he repented; and we know that he brought forth fruits meet for repentance, because we read of

the humble submission with which he met the death of his child, which was part of the judgment sent by God as a punishment of the sin. I know that David's repentance was bitter; he poured out his soul in the fifty-first Psalm, where he acknowledges his wickedness, and says that his sin is ever before him; he confesses that his sin is only against God, and he piteously entreats Him to cast him not away from His presence, and take not His Holy Spirit from him.

Let me consider the nature and effect of true penitence, which is so necessary to one who has sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

God sends His messenger to warn me; it is either the voice of conscience, or the voice of the preacher, or the words of a friend, or some such warning voice, which comes like Nathan, and either directly, or indirectly, shews the wickedness of which I am guilty. This voice goes to my heart; I am convinced, I see my sin, I am ashamed, and cry out, "I have sinned against the LORD." This confession of guilt is only the commencement of the repentance, which consists not in words, nor in a single act,

but in a series, a continuance of sorrow and penitence, and cries for pardon, and strivings, and groans that cannot be uttered. I judge myself, I condemn myself, I try to punish myself, by fastings, and self-denials, and watchings, and prayers, and tears. Sometimes God may send His own punishment, and then my self-inflicted ones may be less needed ; but nothing that I can do can reconcile me to God, though my deeds may place me in a position to receive His eternal favours. No: I must confess my sins, for He is faithful and just to forgive my sins ; I must lay open my wounds, in order to obtain a cure from the LORD. I feel that I am not a judge in my own case of the nature and extent of the evils of my soul ; I therefore fly to my best earthly friend, I lay my conscience open to him, I ask his advice, his prayers ; and he assists in probing my wounds, and in applying the remedies which God has ordained. But I walk on in fear and trembling, for I have sinned against the LORD ; and though I repent, and walk as a penitent, and humble myself all my days, yet I fear to commit another sin ; I am set in the midst of many dangers and temptations ; I fear lest I should

not carry myself upright ; and I do not look to finish my work of repentance, until I have finished my course in this life.

Oh, may I go on increasing in penitence for my many sins, remembering that nothing that is excellent is wrought suddenly, and desiring earnestly to bring my penitence to the excellent end of living a holy life close to God, and in continual recollection of the intercession of His dear Son.

My soul, in thy efforts after the fruits and benefits of repentance, consider the prayers and groans and sighs of CHRIST, Who for eighteen hundred years and upwards has never ceased His intercession for thee. That repentance of thine was bought with a price : oh, let it be sincere and lasting and perfect ; let not the intercession of CHRIST be fruitless ; count not the Blood of the Cross an unholy thing ; take the light yoke and easy burden of CHRIST upon thee ; and look onwards to the glorious reward of heaven ; — look up to that heavenly Jerusalem, and to the Throne of the eternal Majesty : does not that consideration make all appear easy to thee ?

Heaven would be cheaply won were even this

life to be expended in nothing but continual labours and miseries, the loss of a right hand, of a right eye, of the first-born of thy love ; but thou hast only to obey God, to keep His commandments, to repent and amend: who would not repent for this? O my LORD, look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me the way everlasting.

Saturday

AFTER SIXTH SUNDAY.

BUT NOW HE IS DEAD, WHEREFORE SHOULD I FAST? CAN I
BRING HIM BACK AGAIN? I SHALL GO TO HIM,
BUT HE SHALL NOT RETURN TO ME.
2 Samuel, xii. 23.

THERE is much to meditate upon in this history of the death of David's son, which Bathsheba bare unto him. First, I must remember that the sickness and death of the child was a visitation sent by God as a punishment for David's enormous crime. David was sensible of the punishment, he felt it most acutely as such; the description of his grief is simple and affecting. He besought the Lord, he fasted, he lay upon the ground, he would not be persuaded to relax his supplications, he refused to be comforted,—hoping that his grief might appease the Divine vengeance, and that God would spare his son. But it was not so;

for on the seventh day the child died : then David, contrary to the expectations of his servants, who, from his former grief, thought that the child's death would bring him to despair, rose from the ground ; he put off his mourning apparel, resumed his serenity, and by his entire submission to the decree of the Almighty, shewed that he put himself entirely into His hand, and acknowledged the wisdom and justice of His visitation. His prayers had not been answered according to their own tenor, but they were answered according to the mercy and wisdom of God. The child was taken, but peace and resignation were given to David : he knew that the beloved one of his heart was in the safe custody of God ; and that, though the eye of him who had seen him should see him no more, yet that he would be enjoying the rest and calm peace of the eternal mansions of the Most High, where he himself would join him in that blest place, of which the sweet psalmist of Israel knew so well how to describe the joys.

My soul, thou oughtest to be prepared for every sorrow with which God is pleased to visit thee ; so as to walk on, in thy earthly

pilgrimage, with heart well braced and set to meet every trial as it comes upon thee.

First of all, thou oughtest to take any affliction as a punishment sent for thy sins, of which, alas ! thou mayest fix upon but too many which deserve such punishment. When the affliction comes, (and earthly trials will come, and will make the frail, weak flesh to quiver under their grievous blows,) thou must prostrate thyself before the LORD ; weary Him with prayers and importunities ; fast, watch, and pray ; for who can tell whether God will be gracious unto thee : but if the child die, (my soul, thou art afflicted at the very thought,) then arise, God's will is shewn ; thy prayers have not been answered literally, but be sure and very confident that they are heard in the way that is best for thee ; and though thy human nature weeps and smarts under God's visitation, yet thou wilt bless the LORD, Who has chastened and corrected thee, but has not given thee over unto spiritual death. When any such visitation comes upon thee, be prepared to walk humbly with thy God ; remember thy sins ; think on God's justice, but more on His mercy ; rely upon His promises ; see the Redeemer's Blood

poured over thy loved one, the everlasting Arms wrapped round his loving form ; trust him wholly in the keeping of the Almighty, Who, if He sees fit, will hear thy prayers ; if not, thou wilt have treasure in heaven that fadeth not away, and to which it will be one of the joys of heaven to be re-united ; and thou wilt exclaim, " The LORD gave, the LORD hath taken away ; blessed be the Name of the LORD."

In all time of our tribulation :

In all time of our wealth :

In the hour of death :

In the Day of Judgment :

Good LORD, deliver us.

Seventh Sunday after Trinity.


BUT NOW BEING MADE FREE FROM SIN, AND BECOME
SERVANTS TO GOD, YE HAVE YOUR FRUIT UNTO
HOLINESS, AND THE END EVERLASTING
LIFE. — Romans, vi. 22.

HOW am I made free from sin? By the Blood of JESUS. The disobedience of our first parents entailed the fearful curse of sin upon the whole race of man: we became altogether corrupt, and the whole history of the Old Testament is a record of the sins and miseries which were in the world. The Law condemned, but did not remove, the evil; for the evil heart of man prompted him to continual acts of disobedience: and the histories of the best men are but melancholy exhibitions of the frailty and weakness of our mortal nature.

But in the process of time there came One, Who, in the form of a Man, — yea, of a poor, weak Man, without form or comeliness, — lived

a hard life, full of toils and labours, of bodily and mental suffering. "He wept;" "He sighed;" He was in an agony; He was betrayed, and scorned, and spit upon, and mocked, and scourged, and crucified! All these trials He suffered, shewing that He was a Man, tempted in all points like as we are. He was sinless; He was God Incarnate! This is the answer to the question—How am I made free from sin? The Sinless has died to free me from that bitter bondage; and having been baptized into fellowship with the gracious Saviour, being enlisted as one of His soldiers and servants, I am placed in such a situation as enables me to bring forth fruit unto holiness.

Here I am, then, a servant of JESUS CHRIST, having renounced all fellowship with the works of darkness. A servant is at the beginning unknowing of his duties, and at first finds them irksome; he commits many faults, and has many misgivings about his duty; but if he sincerely wishes to do his duty, if he is awakened to a sense of the responsibility in which his master has placed him, he will frequently apply to that master for advice and assistance. His master is kind: the servant



loves him more and more; strives more heartily to serve him; is more and more sorry when he fails, and gives his master cause of offence: he goes on improving until his master takes him nearer into his confidence; until he calls him no more a servant, but a friend; and, finally, rewards him with the great benefit which has been promised at the end of faithful service.

My soul, dost thou see in this thy position? and dost thou realize thy duty towards that gracious Saviour, Who has freed thee from the service of sin, and holds out before thee so glorious a prize? Thou must apply to thy God, to the LORD of all power and might, for strength to perform what appears easy, but is most difficult — the daily walk of Christian service — the routine of duty. To make a great exertion, and to perform a single act even of exalted holiness, is easier than the ever recurring small service that God requires at the hand of ordinary Christians: to pray regularly at set times with devout and reverent attention, is more difficult than to pour forth the soul in a lengthened petition when the feelings are excited into a state of fervour: and yet, my soul, thou must aim at a regular steady growth in holiness;

thou must pray for the assistance of God the Holy Spirit, to supply the necessary nourishment for thy piety; and thou must supplicate God for the grace of perseverance, that thou mayest go on constantly striving for and aiming at the prize of thy high calling, even everlasting life. The end of our exertions, the reward of our toil, is everlasting happiness in heaven,—there to dwell with God in the enjoyment of that ineffable communion, in the fruition of that holiness, of which the seeds have been sown in this present life. One sentence suffices to explain the bliss of heaven: *we shall live with God.*



Monday

AFTER SEVENTH SUNDAY.

FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH ; BUT THE GIFT OF GOD
IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST
OUR LORD. — Romans, vi. 23.

THE effects of one sin, that of our first parents, come constantly before my eyes : I see them recorded in Holy Scripture ; I feel them in myself ; I am sinful, and the wages of sin is death ; I am a lost, dying, and perishing creature ; this is my inheritance from Adam. But I am adopted into a better inheritance ; I have had a gift, through the righteousness of One ; and though of myself I can do nothing that is good, yet the obedience of One has supplied that which I lacked ; I am accounted as righteous through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, by Whom I have now received the atonement. Now, I joy and rejoice in the mercy of my God through JESUS CHRIST, for I

have been buried with Him in Baptism, I hope henceforth to live unto Him in newness of life. The old man is crucified in me, and I most earnestly pray that the whole body of sin may be destroyed, so that I may live entirely unto God. But I must never forget, that eternal life, and the way to attain that state of salvation, is the free unmerited gift of God. What is it that God bestows on me; what is this gift? It is Himself. He vouchsafed to bring me to the waters of Baptism; there He cleansed me, and fitted me to become a temple of the HOLY GHOST: and although this sacred temple has not been kept in all the purity and holiness that such a sacred abode should maintain, so that it is not a fitting place for Him to dwell in; yet I pray Him to grant me strength to exert those powers with which He has endued me, in rooting out all evil inclinations, and bad habits, and idle thoughts, and hasty words, and ill-considered actions, which so ruin and lay waste my inner man; and I entreat Him not to withdraw the precious gift which will lead me finally to everlasting life.

O LORD, Whose precious gift to me is so much above all that I can desire or deserve,

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grant that my whole self, being the casket in which so precious a treasure is deposited, may be so reverently accounted of by me, that I may chase away from me all evil; and may strive to make myself wholly a receptacle of holy thoughts, and desires after spiritual things and heavenly aspirations; that at the Last Day I may be found acceptable in Thy sight, and may inherit this Thy gracious promise of eternal life.

Tuesday

AFTER SEVENTH SUNDAY.

I HAVE COMPASSION ON THE MULTITUDE, BECAUSE THEY HAVE
NOW BEEN WITH ME THREE DAYS, AND HAVE
NOTHING TO EAT.—St. Mark, viii. 2.

THE people had followed Jesus into the wilderness: they had preferred attending upon Him, and receiving gifts of healing and restoration from all their miseries, to the nourishment of their bodies. I may in some degree bring before me the entire occupation of the mind that the preaching of our blessed LORD must have been. The divine truths uttered, and the divine Preacher, must have kept the eager listeners so intent, that they did not remember their bodily wants. Our Saviour knew that, as they returned, they would begin to feel the want of food, and “He had compassion on

them." Here admire the tenderness of our loving LORD; yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the LORD merciful unto them that fear Him. The multitudes had taken no thought for their bodily nourishment; therefore our LORD, after feeding their souls with the Word of Life, and healing all their diseases, was pleased to provide for their corporeal sustenance; according to what He promised: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

It is "in the wilderness," apart from the noise and hurry of the world, that I must go and look for Him, my dear compassionate Saviour. I must not expect that He will be accessible where business and pleasure strive together to dissipate men's minds from thinking of their God; but it is in the stillness of a solitary place, in the silence of my closet, in the hallowed precincts of the Temple of the LORD,—there may I look out for JESUS, there will He approach me, there will He feed me with that heavenly food—the upholding and supporting grace of His Holy Spirit. But as

the multitudes went forth to seek the Lord, even so must I recollect that He will not come unto me, unless I make some exertion to approach Him; and as the multitude suffered from their attendance upon their LORD, so must I expect that certain personal inconveniences and self-denials may arise, as I go to the LORD; but when I am with Him, I shall feel nothing but the delight of receiving and following His blessed precepts. Oh! taste and see how gracious the LORD is;—blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. O fear the LORD, ye His saints; for they that fear Him lack nothing. My soul, thy lot is cast in the midst of the busy, bustling world; thou hast no time for those retirements and blessed opportunities of spiritual rest and refreshment, which some persons enjoy. God's good Providence has ordered this; and thou must make thy rules and arrangements accordingly. Thou must follow CHRIST into the wilderness, by making a little wilderness within thee: shut out the world and retire into thyself; there meet thy Saviour in frequent recollection and mental prayers. He will have compassion on thee;

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He sees thy needs ; He looks with an eye of pity on thee, hungering and thirsting for more frequent intercourse with Him ; and He will feed thee with His hidden manna, lest thou faint in the steep and rugged path over which thou hast to pass unto thy eternal home.

Wednesday

AFTER SEVENTH SUNDAY.

AND HE COMMANDED THE PEOPLE TO SIT DOWN ON THE GROUND: AND HE TOOK THE SEVEN LOAVES, AND GAVE THANKS, AND BRAKE, AND GAVE TO HIS DISCIPLES TO SET BEFORE THEM.— St. Mark, viii. 6.

BEHOLD our LORD standing surrounded by the multitudes. I may imagine that His position was on ground rather higher than that on which the people were disposed around Him in groups. They could all look up to the compassionate Saviour Who felt such pity for their situation. The food for this great assemblage is brought; it requires no great attendance of persons to bear the load of provisions; seven loaves are all that they have, and these are brought unto Him. He gives thanks; for the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible, supplies everything which we enjoy, and to Him we must

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acknowledge the blessing. He breaks the bread, and gives it to His disciples, who distribute it to the people. All eat and are filled, and the fragments which remain fill seven baskets. I must remark that our blessed Lord used the bread that they had at hand; He did not create a large supply, but infinitely extended that which they possessed, until it not only filled seven thousand people, but there was enough of the fragments left to fill seven baskets. In this, as in other miracles, our Lord extends His power just enough to serve the purpose; there is no waste, if I may so say, of miraculous aid, and He ever uses the simplest means to accomplish His end. Our dear and only Saviour stands now in the midst of the members of His Church, and He dispenses His heavenly good things just in the measure they are required. He holds out the Holy Scriptures, from which I am fed and nourished by example, by reproof, by instruction in righteousness: He holds out the ordinary means of grace, prayer, preaching, public worship, — these contain the bread of life, and are to be received with thanks: but, above all, He holds out the extraordinary and special

means of grace, the Holy Sacrament of His Body and Blood, in which He Himself vouchsafes to visit us, and to be partaken of by us, if we are living in faith and charity. He says, "I am the living Bread that came down from heaven; if any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever; and the Bread that I give is My Flesh, that I give for the life of the world. Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life."

My soul, endeavour to be always with thy LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. He will constantly supply thee with that heavenly food which is necessary to prevent thy fainting while proceeding on thy pilgrimage. Receive eagerly the Holy Scripture, from which, if thou study it with prayerful attention, thou wilt be ever deriving food, calculated in its strength to thy advancement on thy Christian course; but before and beyond all things, seek to receive the true Bread of heaven in the holy Eucharist. Thou art fainting, discouraged; thy sins are many, thy difficulties great; the world clings round thee, thou hast not strength to proceed: call out to thy Saviour; prostrate thyself before His altar; beseech Him to

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strengthen and refresh thee with the holy life-giving food, which, to the faithful and penitent, is His holy Body, His most precious Blood: He will hear thee, and will give Himself to thy earnest faith and true penitence.

O how sweet is Thy Spirit, O LORD, Who, to the end Thou mightest shew forth Thy sweetness toward Thy children, dost vouchsafe to feed them with the Bread that is full of sweetness, even that which cometh down from heaven. What creature under heaven is so beloved as the devout soul into which God Himself entereth to nourish it with His glorious Flesh. O unspeakable grace, O admirable condescension, O unmeasurable love, specially bestowed on man!

But what return shall I make to the LORD for this grace, for love so unparalleled?

There is nothing else that I am able to present more acceptable than to offer my heart wholly to my God, and to unite it most unreservedly to Him.

Vouchsafe, O LORD, to remain with me, for I will gladly be with Thee.

This is my whole desire, that my heart be united unto Thee.

Thursday

AFTER SEVENTH SUNDAY.

AND DAVID SAID UNTO GAD, I AM IN A GREAT STRAIT : LET
US FALL NOW INTO THE HAND OF THE LORD ; FOR HIS
MERCIES ARE GREAT : AND LET ME NOT FALL INTO THE
HAND OF MAN. — 2 Sam. xxiv. 14.

THE anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and David was made the instrument of their punishment; the LORD moved him to number the people. David therefore persisted, against the advice of Joab and his chief captains, in numbering Israel and Judah; which was not an act for the good of his subjects, but merely to minister to his own pride and vain glory. But when the deed was done, the heart of David smote him; for God sent the prophet Gad to rebuke him, to offer three modes of punishment for his choice, — a seven years' famine, three months' pursuit by his enemies, or three days' pestilence. David was sorely

perplexed, but he had experienced the goodness and loving mercy of the LORD; he knew also the un pitying relentlessness of man: and he chose rather to cast himself upon his God. God sent pestilence. I remark here how God makes use of the sins of an individual as a means of punishing nations. The Israelites were punished through the presumptuous pride of David. How do I know, if I fall into sin, whether the LORD will not set me up, in my humble sphere, as an instrument for executing this just retribution upon sinners? This is yet another consideration which ought to make my faults and sins more odious to me: they are sure to bring punishment upon myself; they are nearly certain of punishing, more or less, those with whom I have to do. But let me think again; my faults bring punishments with them. As surely as I sin, or as I commit any error, so surely is the justice of God certain to come upon me, and to punish me, either in this world or in the next. Then may I say with David, I am in a great strait, but it is because of this certainty of punishment; and I would say unto the LORD, besides beseeching Him not to give me into the hands of men, — LORD, in this life;

not in the next : O punish me here, that I fall not into eternal condemnation in the world to come.

My soul, thou mayest say with David, "Thy mercies are great." How great is the sum of all the loving-kindnesses of the LORD ! Truly He is like a tender father, who punishes his children for their profit ; not according to the greatness of their fault, but just so much as will serve for their correction. Even so, my soul, cling to thy God for correction ; shrink not from His chastening ; but remember, that whom the LORD loveth He chasteneth, and that it is love alone that causeth Him to stoop to behold so despicable a creature as thou art. But thou hast the Substance of which David only saw the shadow ; thou hast JESUS, the Sacrifice, the Mediator, Who between thy sins and the offended Majesty on High, interposed His precious Body, nailed to the Cross. When thou sinnest, thou hast the constant intercession of CHRIST on thy behalf. O be joyful, my soul ; thou hast indeed fallen into the hands of the LORD, and His mercies have been great. O LORD, destroy me not by the direful pestilence of sin ; but behold, I place myself

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in Thy hands. Look upon the face of Thine
Anointed; behold the Propitiation for my sins;
and be merciful to me a sinner, yea, the chief,
the most wretched of sinners. *Amen.*

Friday

AFTER SEVENTH SUNDAY.

GO UP, REAR AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD IN THE THRESHING-
FLOOR OF ARAUNAH THE JEBUSITE. —

2 Samuel, xxiv. 18.

THE Word of the LORD went forth, and the pestilence raged in Israel: the angel of the LORD stood between heaven and earth with a drawn sword in his hand, to destroy Jerusalem: but the LORD repented Him of the evil; He stayed the hand of the angel, and the plague ceased at the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite. From what is subsequently said of Araunah, I may suppose him to have been a good man; his willingness to part with his possessions shewed that he had the fear of God before his eyes. Thus is placed before my mind that vital doctrine of our holy religion, "That as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners; so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous."

David confessed his guilt, and interceded for his people : and Gad, the prophet, came and commanded him to raise an altar to the LORD in the place where the plague was stayed. An altar implies a sacrifice ; and without going further in the narrative, where mention is made of the sacrifice, I must here stop and consider that each pestilence mentioned in Holy Scripture is either stayed or atoned for by a sacrifice, or a type of a sacrifice. In the gainsaying of Core, Aaron ran in between the living and the dead with his offering of burnt incense, and the plague was stayed : in the murmuring of the people in the wilderness, there was the great type of the Great Sacrifice ; on which whosoever looked, who was afflicted by the plague, was healed : and David offered a sacrifice on the threshing floor of Araunah, when the angel of the LORD had sheathed his sword after the terrible destruction of the people of Israel.

What does this bring before my eyes, but the one, full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice once offered upon the Cross ?

The angel of the LORD is gone forth with hand uplifted to smite all the earth ; all are dead in trespasses and sins ; the deadly pesti-

lence infects all the race of man ; we are all tied and bound by the chain of our sins ; we are so fast in prison that we cannot get forth : but the LORD hath repented Him of the evil, — we are not to die : for, look up and lift up your head ; there, nailed to a Cross, His Body stretched out so that thou canst tell all His bones, the Blood streaming from the pierced hands, the nail-driven feet, the thorn-crowned head, — there hangs the Sacrifice, the only Propitiation which could appease the wrath of God, and stop the leprosy of sin.

O my soul, thou canst consider nothing that will render thee such fruit, as the Atonement offered for thee by thy Saviour ; every subject brings thee back to that one fact, which is the beginning and end of all thy Christian learning. If thou seekest for love, look on the Cross, and think that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. If for joy, think upon Him, who endured the Cross, despising the shame, and now sits at the right hand of the Majesty on High, and there He is preparing a place for us. If thou seekest peace, look on

the Prince of Peace, Who suffered that thou mightest be saved from thy sins. Dost thou want to cultivate long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance, patience, charity? look upon JESUS in the judgment hall, JESUS bearing His Cross, JESUS praying for His enemies, JESUS promising paradise to the repentant thief, JESUS commending His mother to His disciple, JESUS yielding up His spirit into the hands of His Father! It is finished; the Sacrifice is offered; the Atonement is made.

O gracious LORD, grant that I may by a full and holy faith in Thy dear Son, lay hold upon the advantages promised to those who humbly trust in Him; and may I appropriate to myself a part of the tremendous Sacrifice once offered on Calvary.

Saturday

AFTER SEVENTH SUNDAY.

NEITHER WILL I OFFER BURNT OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD
MY GOD OF THAT WHICH DOTHS COST ME
NOTHING. — 2 Samuel, xxiv. 24.

LET me consider the great reason that David had to be thankful unto the LORD, for his deliverance and that of his people from the great strait which had threatened them all with destruction. I shall then see that David, in his thankfulness, would not consider that done unto God at all, if done at the cost of others, and without inconvenience to himself.

When I find myself occupied all the day long in the duties which my calling devolves upon me, I regret having so small a portion to give to God; and I am told, that if I perform my daily tasks unto God, and take all my worldly duties in a religious spirit, God will accept them as a sacrifice unto Himself; but

I find that, when a duty is irksome, I am apt to murmur and to complain. Now, if I am to perform all my duties unto God, the cheerful performance of those most irksome will be the most acceptable; it will be the offering of that which has cost me something. Let me henceforth resolve that all my doings shall be performed with this one object, and let my direct religious acts be done in the same spirit of self-denial. Let my alms be extended to my own inconvenience; let me take personal trouble, and suffer personal inconvenience, in the performance of my other devotional acts,—attending public worship, relieving the distressed, and remembering those numberless small acts of kindness to my neighbour, which are all sacrifices which cost me something.

Above all, as an additional incitement not to offer unto the LORD of that which cost thee nothing, remember, my soul, the Sacrifice of the only Son of God; what did it cost thy Saviour to redeem thee? Go over, in thy imagination, all the passages of His life, from His birth in the stable to His death on the Cross; reckon up the vast sum of the personal suffering, the mental agony, the spiritual destitution

of that adorable Saviour, and see what it cost to redeem thee ; and, to make the remembrance more striking, think that it was God, but in His human nature, Who suffered, and that thou, and such as thou, were the objects of that vast Sacrifice.

O my soul, repine no more at what thou hast to do or to suffer, but rather rejoice when thou canst offer unto the LORD of that which has cost thee something. Rest not content until thou hast brought every thought and every action, every motion of thy will, every impulse, into obedience to the will of God ; until thou canst say unto the LORD, Behold, LORD, here am I, Thy most unworthy servant ; behold, upon the altar of Thy mercy I lay my whole self, Thou knowest what it has cost me ; I am unworthy, LORD, deeply unworthy, but, LORD, accept me for JESUS' sake. *Amen.*

Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

IF YE THROUGH THE SPIRIT DO MORTIFY THE DEEDS OF
THE BODY, YE SHALL LIVE. — Rom. viii. 13.

O GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy give to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve; send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.


God, in His undeserved mercy, has made me capable of using His good Spirit; for at my Baptism I had that precious gift conferred upon me, which was to enable me “to have victory, and to triumph against sin, the world, and the devil, and to become CHRIST’s faithful soldier and servant unto my life’s end.” This gift of the Spirit does not give me a victory, but it supplies me with armour, and it gives

me the power to do that which of myself were impossible. The battle which I have to fight against sin in my own members is the most difficult one; the enemy is ever present; I cannot evade him; he watches my smallest actions; he takes advantage, not of words only, but even of thoughts; and is ever ready to thrust at me in an unguarded moment.

Now, until I can bring my flesh into subjection to the Holy Spirit of God, I shall have to sustain this warfare; indeed it will not entirely end until my existence in this world ceases: but I may have so conquered and subdued the "strong armed man," that he will not venture an assault, if I do but keep vigilant.

The Scripture speaks strongly and plainly, that the mind, unsubdued and set on worldly and fleshly objects, is on the road to eternal ruin. To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Mortify your members that are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry. These fearful crimes are the legitimate ending of what began only in an evil habit indulged, a seemingly innocent gratifica-



tion unchecked, a thoughtless jest, or a heedless want of care and thought. Let me therefore beware lest, while slumbering in supposed safety, these small things grow up into great sins, and I become carnal minded and hopelessly given up to the flesh.

It were vain to attempt to enumerate all the various ways in which I ought to mortify the flesh: the indulgence of appetite, in eating much, and of such things as are agreeable to the taste, may soon lead to gluttony; and though I may eat, and thank God for His good things, yet must I know both how to abound and how to suffer need in that respect.

The tongue is also a member liable to temptation: every word must be watched, and carefully pruned; silence is to the tongue what fasting is to the body, and is to be used as a means of bringing the whole under the guidance of God's good Spirit. The mortification of the eye, the touch, the smell, must be all attended to, and must be brought under the same Spirit, so that all may be used without being abused.

My soul, resolve to cultivate a mortified spirit; carry thy cross with thee wherever thou goest; and walk on with recollection,

with calmness and quietness, and give thyself no rest from thy endeavours to bring thy flesh into subjection to that good Spirit, Who will ceaselessly abide with those whose hearts are pure and whose hands are clean.

LORD, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle : or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill ?

Even he, that leadeth an uncorrupt life : and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart.

He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour : and hath not slandered his neighbour.

He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes : and maketh much of them that fear the LORD.

He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not : though it were to his own hindrance.

He that hath not given his money upon usury : nor taken reward against the innocent.

Whoso doeth these things : shall never fall.

Monday

AFTER EIGHTH SUNDAY.

**YE HAVE RECEIVED THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION, WHEREBY WE
CRY, ABBA, FATHER. — Rom. viii. 15.**

O GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy give to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve; send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through **JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.**

God is our Father: He has adopted me by Baptism, has made me His child, an inheritor of His everlasting kingdom, and a partaker of the salvation which is by **CHRIST JESUS.** And Who is this kind and forgiving Father, Who has overlooked the corruption of my nature, and has given me so glorious an inheritance, allowing me to call Him Father, and Who daily

sheds so many blessings around me? He is God, the all-powerful. He made the worlds: He framed the heavens, and fixed the sun and moon in their courses; He made this glorious and beautiful world, and all the wonders of nature by which we are surrounded: He made man, and gave him a body and members fitly joined together, and perfect in every particular; He endowed him with reason, with senses, with every feeling that might contribute to his well-being and happiness: everything that is, from the leviathan which moveth in the waters, to the worm which creeps in the dust, are all His creation, and He sustains them in the wonderful and beautiful order in which we behold them moving around us. O LORD, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all!

This loving and benevolent Father is omnipresent. If I climb up to heaven He is there; if I go down to hell He is there also; if I take the wings of the morning and travel with the sun from one end of the firmament to the other, even there His hand shall lead me, and His right hand shall hold me. I mix in the world, in the busy assemblies of men; there is the eye

of God ever upon me, watching the movements of His unworthy child. If I retire into my closet, there is the eye of the Omnipresent. He cares for me and never leaves me : He searches my most secret thoughts, for He is omniscient : He takes knowledge of everything, and He directs the counsels of mighty kings and the mute communings of the lonely heart. This great and glorious Being deigns to be my Father : He enters into the smallest concerns of the lowliest of His people, and of me, too, lower than all. He is gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and of great goodness.

He hath not dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me according to my iniquity. Like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the LORD merciful unto them that fear Him. The LORD is loving unto every man, and His mercies are over all His works.

He delighteth in mercy, He is the Father of mercies.

O my soul, what rest and peace there is in the thought that thou hast a tender Father Who is overlooking thee, and with infinite compassion guiding thee ! Become as a little child, and trust thyself, with the confiding simplicity

of childhood, in the Arms of thy everlasting Father. Beg Him absolutely to dispose of thee, and feel no concern as to what is to befall thee, for He knoweth what thou canst bear, and He will not suffer thee to be tempted above thy strength.

Tuesday

AFTER EIGHTH SUNDAY.

BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS, WHICH COME TO YOU IN
SHEEP'S CLOTHING, BUT INWARDLY THEY ARE
RAVENING WOLVES. — St. Matt. vii. 15.

O GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy give to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve; send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through **JESUS CHRIST our LORD.**

I am apt to think that, being a member of **CHRIST'S Holy Church**, I am safe from harm; that I am in no danger of being led into error, while I go on adhering to the Church's rules, and hearing the teaching of her ordained ministers. This passage shews, that our blessed **LORD** knew that His disciples and those who

followed in their steps would be exposed to danger, even while they were listening to those who they supposed were leading them in the right way. The false prophets would not be easily discerned from true prophets; they would be disguised in the clothing of those who were true sheep of our LORD's fold, and who listen to His voice; but this outward disguise would hide the ugly form of some who were seeking to devour and destroy those whom they professed to teach.

This shews that we are not to give ourselves to every kind of teaching which we meet with, even in the Church, unless it bear the test of a strict adherence to the Church's doctrine and discipline; we are to beware lest any man spoil us through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after CHRIST. For this purpose were our reasoning faculties given us; not to dispute against the doctrines delivered by the Holy Spirit in His holy Word, but to try the spirits whether they be of God, and to see whether the fruits of the Spirit are manifest in them. Let me, therefore, be contented to be blindly led, not by man, nor by the traditions

of men, but by God's Holy Spirit only; to that let me ever submit myself wholly, as an obedient child.

But these false prophets shall be known by their fruits: we are to watch those who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, and avoid them.

Let me not imagine this to be a small matter, or a trifling consideration; we know not how near we may be to those fearful "latter days," which precede the second Advent of our Lord. In those days false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will deceive many: how dreadful if, when He our Great Judge shall come, He find us led astray by one of these false prophets, for want of "taking heed."

My soul, beware! thou knowest what things belong unto thy peace; let no man deceive thee; be ever on thy guard against the traditions of men; be ever anxious to be led by God's blessed Spirit; and live in constant watch against the temptations which are to assail men in the latter days. Pray with increasing fervour that thou mayest have strength to withstand the shock of those temptations; and that, when He shall come to judge the world,

thou mayest be found among the elect. Give not thyself weakly and suddenly to those who prophesy smooth things, and who speak a vision of their own heart, and not of the Lord. Beware lest thou at last discover, under the sheep's clothing, the ravening and grim form of a greedy wolf.

Are your minds set upon righteousness, O ye congregation : and do ye judge the thing that is right, O ye sons of men ?

Yea, ye imagine mischief in your heart upon the earth : and your hands deal with wickedness.

The ungodly are froward, even from their mother's womb : as soon as they are born, they go astray, and speak lies.

They are as venomous as the poison of a serpent : even like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears ;

Which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer : charm he never so wisely.

Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths ; smite the jaw-bones of the lions, O LORD : let them fall away like water that runneth apace ;

and when they shoot their arrows let them be rooted out.

Let them consume away like a snail, and be like the untimely fruit of a woman : and let them not see the sun.

Or ever your pots be made hot with thorns : so let indignation vex him, even as a thing that is raw.

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance : he shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly.

So that a man shall say, Verily, there is a reward for the righteous : doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth.

Wednesday.

AFTER EIGHTH SUNDAY.

NOT EVERY ONE THAT SAITH UNTO ME, LORD, LORD, SHALL
ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ; BUT HE THAT
DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.
— St. Matthew, vii. 21.

O GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy
give to Thy unworthy servants more than
they can either desire or deserve; send to me,
the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit,
that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth
fruit acceptable to Thee, through JESUS CHRIST
our LORD.

Let me consider the entire unfruitfulness of
a profession of love towards God, of reliance on
His providence, — even of faith in Him, unless
the conduct be in every particular shaped in
obedience to His law, which alone gives evi-
dence of love ; and unless the course of life be

ordered in accordance with the decrees of His providence; and unless every action show that there is a sense of the presence of that awful Being, Whom we presume to call LORD, LORD. Let me think of the awful hypocrisy of pretending to call upon the mighty God with lip service, and of practically denying Him by the conduct of every day life.

On the other hand, let me think of the life of a true believer in the LORD, of one who shows forth his religion by his works, and who brings forth the fruits of holiness. Such a one talks not freely and before every one of his religious feelings; they are too deep for utterance, excepting to the chosen friends of his bosom, who share his every sentiment. He goes on quietly and calmly in his own direct path, looking only to see what the will of God is, as revealed in His Holy Word, or as indicated by His providential leadings. He is ever quiet before others, but shrinks not from avowing his principles, if occasion call for it. His love to God, and obedience to His blessed will, lead him to be very tender and charitable towards all men, and to perform small unobserved acts

of kindness, with as much pleasure as he would do great things which would gain him the admiration of every one.

. My soul, thou must observe from this, that the Christian course is ever a quiet and unobtrusive one: "deeds, not words," ought to be the motto of every true follower of Him, Who commanded the leper: "See that thou tell no man." Whatever thy external circumstances may be, whether in the hurry of worldly affairs or in the more dangerous sphere of religious excitement, keep thy inward life calm, ever fit for communion with the High and Holy Lord God. Be ever mindful to avoid letting thy profession go before thy works, — always do more than thou sayest; but be always ascending nearer to God: let thy deeds grow higher and higher, until thy perfect obedience shows that thou art ever doing or seeking to do the will of thy Father Which is in heaven.

Resolve from this time, O my soul, to be especially careful not to use unreal words respecting thy spiritual concerns. Resolve never to express more than thou feelest, when speaking of holy things; but in thy prayers endea-

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vour to raise both thy mind and thy words to the height which the addresses made to the King of kings and Lord of lords ought to attain, and "strive to live more nearly as we pray."

Thursday

AFTER EIGHTH SUNDAY.

AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER A WHILE, THAT THE BROOK
DRIED UP, BECAUSE THERE HAD BEEN NO RAIN
IN THE LAND.—1 Kings xvii. 7.

O GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy give to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve; send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

Our heavenly Father causeth His sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good, and sendeth His rain on the just and the unjust. For the wickedness of Ahab and of the Israelites God sent the drought; but the righteous Elijah suffered thereby: nevertheless, by a miracle, God mitigated the sufferings of Elijah;

He sent ravens to feed him, and the waters of the brook Cherith refreshed his fainting spirit. The servant of the LORD had meat to eat, of which the wicked and the worldly-minded knew not; but that wickedness itself was the means of depriving Elijah of his sustenance, for in time the brook dried up. The holy Scriptures always describe the drinking of the waters of a brook as the means of supplying refreshment to the body, as the living waters of God's grace give nourishment to, and raise the drooping soul. "Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God! My soul is athirst for God." I may imagine Elijah saying this, as, sitting on the sandy bank of the little stream, and watching the rapid decrease of its waters, as they stole along like a silver thread through their rugged and stony bed, he mourned over the sins of Ahab, and for the departure of the Israelites from their faith in the LORD their God. He thought on their temporal suffering; but much more he mourned over their spiritual destitution, their holy altars defiled, their worship of idols and vain gods; and his heart turned with higher gratitude to the one living

and true God, Who had dealt with him so mercifully, Who was even now afflicting His children for their profit.

But after a while the brook dried up. May it not be even so with me? I am placed in a situation to partake freely of the means by which God usually imparts His grace; He has led me forth beside the waters of comfort; but I am not profiting as I ought to do by His goodness. How know I that He will not, for my sins, cause a cessation of the rain of His grace, and restrain the dew of His blessing from falling upon me? How know I that for national sins we may not all be deprived of the blessings and privileges which we all now so richly enjoy, and which, alas! we so misuse?

Oh, my soul, meditate earnestly upon the infinite blessing of having the grace of God so freely imparted unto thee, that it may create a longing after its continuance, and cultivate that entire faith and trust in God, that even when He shall see fit to "dry up the brook," thou mayest entertain a sure confidence that He will provide for thee in a way which thou knowest not of.

Let these meditations create a longing for

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and yearning after God and His life-giving Spirit. Seek Him early, thirst for Him, long after Him, and see the barrenness and dryness of thy spiritual existence without Him. Thou wilt have to go through the vale of misery in this world. If it be so, use it as a well: thou wilt find in every occasion a means of acquiring fresh supplies of grace; and then the pools will be to thee full of water, yea, of that Living Water which shall spring up into everlasting life.

Grant, O gracious Saviour, that the time may come when I may never thirst, but that I may be so entirely satisfied with Thy blessed presence, that I may live in continual and blissful contemplation of Thy ineffable glories, to which blessed state bring me in Thy own good time, O my Saviour.

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Friday

AFTER EIGHTH SUNDAY.

AND THE BARREL OF MEAL WASTED NOT, NEITHER DID THE
CRUSE OF OIL FAIL, ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF
THE LORD.—1 Kings, xvii. 16.

O GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy give to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve ; send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

When the brook was dried up, and the means of sustenance cut off, still the LORD was with Elijah, and He directed him to repair to Zarephath, where a widow woman was to sustain him. The king and his company had no rain, and they suffered from the want of

provision, but the man of God had meat enough. The birds of the air fed him, and then a poor widow woman, whose only store was a handful of meal and a little oil in a cruse. The mighty God puts down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth the humble and meek: He filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich He sendeth empty away. The poor widow had no means of replenishing her vessels with provisions; she had determined to eat and to die; but the man of God commanded her to make him a cake, and though she might have feared that her bounty to the stranger would have deprived her and her son of their last morsel, yet she believed the assurance of the prophet, and according to her faith so was it done unto her. The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail.

O blessed Spirit of our God, thus is Thy divine influence infinitely extended unto those who trust in the promises made unto them. Thou art ever with the faithful soul which hungers and thirsts after righteousness; Thou dost not withdraw thy ever ready help from those who seek it in faith and penitence; and thou givest them of the oil which makes man's countenance

cheerful, from contemplating the riches of Thy mercy; and Thou givest them the bread which strengthens man's heart to endure the conflict which is ever going on against sin, the world, and the devil.

My soul, thou art apt to despair lest thy meagreness and low estate should be converted into utter want and destitution: thy oil and thy meal are very low; thou fearest that the little store may be soon consumed, and then thou diest. Fear not; go and do as has been said, make use of the provision thou hast left, and God will not suffer thy meal to waste, nor thy oil to fail, until He sends down that gracious rain from heaven, even His perpetual and evident presence among His elect people, which alone can refresh the weary souls who are hungering and thirsting after Him.

Go on in faith; remember the poor widow woman: but do not think to receive the increase, unless thou exert thyself to make use of the supply thou hast already, however small it may seem to be.

Saturday

AFTER EIGHTH SUNDAY.

AND THE WOMAN SAID TO ELIJAH, NOW BY THIS I KNOW
THAT THOU ART A MAN OF GOD, AND THAT THE
WORD OF THE LORD IN THY MOUTH IS
TRUTH.—1 Kings, xvii. 24.

O GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy give to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve; send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

How blessed is the occasion which causes us to discern the hand of God, and to acknowledge it of a truth!


The poor widow woman imagined, when her son died, that Elijah was the instrument sent to chastise her for a sin which seems to have

rested on her conscience; her words implied a reproach to the prophet, who had partaken of her meal and of her oil. And when she saw the lifeless body of her child stretched before her, she seems to have forgotten the former miracle in her present calamity. But her deep grief, and the forgetfulness of her faith, which that seemed to have brought upon her, were removed when she saw her dead son restored to life. She then saw that He who could raise the dead must be a man of God, and she acknowledged the truth of the word of the LORD uttered by His lips.

In God's dealings with men, it is not always permitted to our blindness and ignorance to see and know the reasons for which He acts.

Here is exposed to us the working of God's providence; and I ought, in the instances which occur both to myself and to others, to have the faith to know, that in the unseen workings of Providence there are as many causes for rejoicing, and for acknowledging the word of the LORD, as when the widow received her son back again.

I suppose myself to be pressed down by a heavy calamity; I writhe under the scourge of



the LORD; I feel every stroke with renewed agony; but I perceive not the change which God is working thereby in my soul: a man of God prays for me, (the effectual fervent prayer availeth much;) and when I find that which was dead restored to life, when "my darling is saved from the dogs," then I see the hand of the LORD, and I acknowledge the justice, and the love, and the mercy of His visitations.

My soul, prepare thyself for the day of affliction; the prophet is with thee, thy oil and thy meal are daily supplied; thou requirest a test whereby to prove thee, and thy heart's darling will be demanded of thee. Give it up to the LORD in faith; thou seest how He deals with His people. And when thou hearest the joyful words, "Thy son liveth," thou wilt lift up thy heart in joy and gratitude, and say, Now know I of a truth that the word of the LORD is in thy mouth, O thou who hast instructed and led me into the way of truth.

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

MOREOVER, BRETHREN, I WOULD NOT THAT YE SHOULD BE
IGNORANT, HOW THAT ALL OUR FATHERS WERE UNDER
THE CLOUD, AND ALL PASSED THROUGH
THE SEA. — 1 Cor. x. 1.

PREVENT me, O LORD, in all my doings,
with Thy most gracious favour, and fur-
ther me with Thy continual help; that in all
my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee,
I may glorify Thy Holy Name; and finally by
Thy mercy, obtain eternal life; through JESUS
CHRIST OUR LORD. *Amen.*

The Apostle brings before us the remem-
brance of the children of Israel, — how, op-
pressed, afflicted, and weighed down in the
land of Egypt, they cried unto the LORD in
their trouble, and He heard them in their
distress; He Himself vouchsafed to be their
guide; He promised them safe possession of a

glorious and fertile land, flowing with milk and honey; and He spread out a cloud for a covering in the day, and fire in the night season.

But before they were to reach that pleasant land, they all had to pass through the sea. How was this difficult passage of the sea accomplished? Even by a miracle: that which would have been impossible with man, was possible to God: He divided the Red Sea in two parts, and His chosen people walked through on dry land.

We, the Israelites of the new covenant, are all conceived and born in sin; we are bond-servants and slaves to sin in the land of Egypt, even this perishing and naughty world. Our God promises to release us from this bondage, and to bring us to a land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands; but before we enter that pleasant place, we have to pass through the waters of Baptism, to be purified from the defilements of the land of Egypt. We shall then be fit to join the glorious band of apostles, prophets, and martyrs, with whom we have been baptized in the cloud, and in the sea; with whom we are journeying towards

the blessed land of promise ; and with whom we all eat the same spiritual meat, and drink the same spiritual drink.

But, my soul, thou canst make a closer application of this passage to thyself. How long hast thou lived in the world, surrounded by its temptations, and led away by its allurements, and hast forgotten the pleasant land of promise, even the Jerusalem that is above — the heavenly Canaan ! Thy God has guided thee by the motions of His good Spirit to seek for the land flowing with milk and honey ; but to attain to it, thou hast to pass through the sea : thine enemies, thy besetting sins, are behind thee ; thou canst not turn back ; thou hast to encounter the troubled waters of affliction — the waves of strife and division, the deep waters of the proud : thou must go boldly on, and struggle through the deep mire where no ground is, and at last attain the promised land. How heavenly is the stillness and quiet of that place of verdure and of dew, after buffeting with the rude waters ! So will it be with thee, O my soul, after having finished thy contest with the world, the flesh, and the devil : having overcome thy own evil nature, and the enemy

who is ever watchful to destroy thee, thou wilt take refuge in the safe resting-place of the Will of thy LORD; thou wilt seek for nothing but Him; thou wilt hope for nothing but Him; thou wilt love nothing but Him.

But thou hast not attained this state: thou must continue to buffet with the waters of this life, in the blessed hope and assurance that the time will come when thou wilt be received into the heavenly country, if only thou persevere.

Save me, O GOD: for the waters are come in, even unto my soul.

I stick fast in the deep mire, where no ground is: I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me.

I am weary of crying; my throat is dry: my sight faileth me for waiting so long upon my GOD.

They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head: they that are mine enemies, and would destroy me guiltless, are mighty.

I paid them the things I never took: GOD, Thou knowest my simpleness, and my faults are not hid from Thee.

Let not them that trust in Thee, O LORD God of hosts, be ashamed for my cause: let not those that seek Thee be confounded through me, O LORD God of Israel.

And why? for Thy sake have I suffered reproof: shame hath covered my face.

I am become a stranger unto my brethren: even an alien unto my mother's children.

For the zeal of Thine house hath even eaten me: and the rebukes of them that rebuked Thee are fallen upon me.

I wept, and chastened myself with fasting: and that was turned to my reproof.

I put on sackcloth also: and they jested upon me.

They that sit in the gate speak against me: and the drunkards make songs upon me.

But, LORD, I make my prayer unto Thee: in an acceptable time.

Hear me, O God, in the multitude of Thy mercy: even in the truth of Thy salvation.

Take me out of the mire, that I sink not: O let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

Let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up: and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

Hear me, O LORD, for thy loving-kindness is comfortable: turn Thee unto me according to the multitude of Thy mercies.

And hide not Thy face from Thy servant, for I am in trouble: O haste Thee, and hear me.

Monday

AFTER NINTH SUNDAY.

NOW ALL THESE THINGS HAPPENED UNTO THEM FOR EN-
SAMPLES: AND THEY ARE WRITTEN FOR OUR ADMONITION,
UPON WHOM THE ENDS OF THE WORLD ARE COME. —
1 Cor. x. 11.

PREVENT me, O LORD, in all my doings,
with Thy most gracious favour, and fur-
ther me with Thy continual help; that in all
my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee,
I may glorify Thy Holy Name; and finally by
Thy mercy obtain eternal life; through JESUS
CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

I am living in the latter days, looking for
and hastening unto the coming of the Day of
the LORD. I am therefore to live in a constant
state of preparation for that great Day, and to
this end I ought to give attentive heed to all
the lessons and admonitions contained in Holy

Scripture. Among these, none contains more awakening warnings than the history of God's own people, the children of Israel. They had experienced the tender mercy of God, in delivering them from their oppressors in the land of Egypt; they passed safely through the Red Sea, guided by the cloud which veiled the glorious presence of Him Who vouchsafed to deliver them. But they forgot these instances of mercy as soon as they felt any inconvenience: they lusted after the flesh-pots of Egypt; they murmured against the High God; they became idolaters; they defiled themselves by associating with the wicked nations through which they passed; they tempted the Lord in the desert; they murmured; and were visited with a swift destruction.

Now all these things are written for my admonition: let me consider the sins pointed out, and see whether I am guilty of any of them.

Do I murmur against the dispensations of God's Providence, or feel dissatisfied with my position in life? Do I give way to self-indulgence, and too much carefulness for the things of this world? How am I then fit to meet my God, and the Saviour Who, while on earth, had not where to lay His head.

Do I set up idols in my heart, and think more of any creature than of my Creator? Am I fond of the world, of riches, of pleasures, of fame? Do I allow my love for my family to obscure my vision of God? How am I then fit to meet the Almighty, the King of kings? Am I strictly pure in my thoughts, words, and actions? If not, how am I fit to meet the All-pure, All-holy?

Do I tempt CHRIST by murmuring, by discontent, by envying the spiritual privileges of others, or thinking meanly of my own? Do I think lightly of my sins; and do I complain of the chastisements which those sins have richly deserved? How am I then fit to meet Him, Who was lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should have everlasting life?

O my soul, how canst thou meet thy God, laden as thou art with sins and infirmities? how canst thou stand face to face with Him Whom thou hast treated with even more ingratitude than did the murmuring Israelites? For the Red Sea, thou hast the waters of Baptism; for the manna, thou hast the Bread of life; for the brazen serpent, thou hast CHRIST Himself.

Monday after Penth Sunday. 359

O tread not under foot the Son of God;
count not the Blood of the covenant an unholy
thing; do not despise unto the Spirit of grace!
Lift up thine eyes unto the Son of God hang-
ing upon the Cross: let that sight cure thy
plague, and inspire thee with a vehement desire
and longing to acquire strength for thy journey
into that pleasant land, where thou wilt have
the fullness of joy, and pleasure for evermore.

O LORD, heavenly Father, give me grace to
withstand the temptations of the world, the
flesh, and the devil, and with a pure heart and
mind to follow Thee, the only God. O Saviour
of the world, Who by Thy Cross and precious
Blood hast redeemed me, save and help me, I
humbly beseech Thee. *Amen.*

Tuesday

AFTER NINTH SUNDAY.

THERE HATH NO TEMPTATION TAKEN YOU BUT SUCH AS IS COMMON TO MAN : BUT GOD IS FAITHFUL, WHO WILL NOT SUFFER YOU TO BE TEMPTED ABOVE THAT YE ARE ABLE ; BUT WILL WITH THE TEMPTATION ALSO MAKE A WAY TO ESCAPE, THAT YE MAY BE ABLE TO BEAR IT.— 1 Cor. x. 13.

PREVENT me, O LORD, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help ; that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy Holy Name ; and finally by Thy mercy obtain eternal life ; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

This passage is both a warning and a comfort to me : a warning that I must be always liable to temptation and sorrow in this world ; and a comfort, inasmuch as God apportions temptation to the strength of each individual, and

gives no more than each can bear, with the help of His grace.

The beginning of all sin is by temptation : without it our first parents would not have transgressed the law of their Maker, and would not have yielded to the suggestions of our great spiritual enemy, who is emphatically called "the tempter."

Let me remember that our great enemy is always walking to and fro upon the earth, seeking occasion to tempt all the frail human beings whose infirmities and sins he notes, in order to bring them to their fall. Let me, therefore, stand girt with the spiritual armour on the right hand and on the left, that I may be able to withstand all the fiery darts of Satan. I must keep a strict watch over myself ; I must mark the beginnings of failings, and be specially on my guard respecting them ; I must use my utmost endeavours to withstand every movement towards evil ; I must not shrink with cowardice from conflict with the temptation, but I must manfully fight against it, as against my bitterest foe.

I must watch, I must pray, I must examine myself, leaving no corner of my soul un-

searched : for temptation creeps in at the smallest opening ; and a trifling weakness, unheeded and indulged, will grow into a great sin, if the approaches of temptation are not warded off.

Faint not, my soul, when surrounded by difficulties, by temptations : thy God is faithful. He will not allow thee to be tempted above that thou art able ; He will give thee a means of escape, and will grant thee a glorious victory over thy temptation, if thou join to thy watching and prayer a determined will and endeavour to overcome it.

My soul, when thou art exceeding sorrowful in the midst of thy temptations, remember thy Saviour. He was in all points tempted as we are, only without sin. O follow His blessed example ; resist the devil manfully ; watch and pray ; and, though the flesh be weak, yet God will see that the spirit is willing, and will renew thy strength for the combat.

Never despair : if thy temptations continue, pray the more fervently, the more frequently ; leave all to God. He is faithful, and He will direct all things to such an issue as thou wilt be able to stand.

Tuesday after Ninth Sunday. 363

O GOD, Who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that, by reason of the frailty of our nature, we cannot always stand upright ; grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations ; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.
Amen.

Wednesday

AFTER NINTH SUNDAY.

WHEREFORE LET HIM THAT THINKETH HE STANDETH
TAKE HEED LEST HE FALL. — 1 Cor. x. 12.

PREVENT me, O LORD, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help; that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy Holy Name; and finally by Thy mercy obtain eternal life; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

When I count over the many blessings and privileges I enjoy,—my birth, my nurture, protection, guidance; my education, religion, civil rights; the gifts of God's grace, of nature, of fortune; my redemption, regeneration, and many calls and opportunities of serving God; I am overpowered with gratitude to the gracious LORD Who has done such things for me.

I am in the habit of daily using God's gifts, whether of nature or of grace; I go regularly to church, have frequent opportunities of receiving the holy Communion of His precious Body and Blood,—and live on, receiving these inestimable blessings, I fear, too much as matters of course. I am a creature of habit; and even the most blessed privileges are used by me more often now as matters of habit, than with a devout realization and application of their efficacy to healing the hurts and bruises of my soul. Yet I am enjoying that which places me above the level of many of my fellow Christians.

This is a fatal and most dangerous state of inactivity and sleepiness. I must up, and be doing: I must take heed lest I fall: I am standing on the edge of a precipice, over which the devil will certainly push me, if I do not take active measures, not only to secure my position, but to advance still higher on the steep and rugged path which leads to eternal life. I must be not high-minded, but fear.

My soul, how canst thou so act as to stand not only in thy own opinion, but in deed; not only without danger of falling, but girt about with the whole armour of God? Watch and

pray. Watch against thyself; guard thy impulses, thy startings, thy intentions, thy attempts, thy goings out and thy comings in, thy sitting down and thy rising up; and then pray. Be ever active in applying the merits of thy Blessed Saviour's Passion to correct, to amend, to wash away, to purify, to enlighten. Do nothing as a matter of course; but put thy strongest will to the work, and pray urgently and most fervently for the grace of God's Holy Spirit to sanctify and enliven all thy doings. Still live on in fear: fear thyself, as thou seest how impure and imperfect thou art in all thy ways; and lean more entirely on thy Saviour, through Whom alone thou canst stand before God, and by Whose blessed Intercession alone thou canst hope to be counted worthy to receive the prize of thy high calling in Him, even life eternal.

Thursday

AFTER NINTH SUNDAY.

GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF THY STEWARDSHIP.

St. Luke, xvi. 2.

PREVENT me, O LORD, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help; that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy Holy Name; and finally by Thy mercy obtain eternal life; through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. *Amen.*

A stewardship being an office which implies much trust, and a steward being a person to whom the most valuable possessions of the master are oftentimes entrusted, I must consider what the parable means in these words, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

By the rich man is meant God; by the steward, a person to whom God entrusts cer-

tain of His gifts. Let me consider what are God's gifts, if indeed I can enumerate what are without number and without price. I may divide God's special and individual gifts into moral, intellectual, and spiritual. All these are given for special purposes, to be used and improved; and a great Day of account is to come, in which each will have to give a history of the things committed to his trust.

What awful words then are these, "Give an account of thy stewardship!"

Behold me standing before my Master, about to give account for all the talents committed to my trust. He says, "I placed thee in the world; gave thee a healthy body, parents and friends to love and care for thee: how hast thou requited Me in this particular? Thou hast not respected thy superiors as thou oughtest to have done; thou hast often resisted their authority, and disobeyed their laws. I gave thee a clear mind, perseverance, good temper: how little hast thou used thy mind; how slothful hast thou been, upon the most trifling excuse; and how hast thou sullied thy natural temper by unseemly impatience, or weakly yielding to the importunities of others!"

Thou hast talents (), how thrown away ! how imperfectly improved — or entirely neglected !

But here is the worst part of the picture : thy spiritual gifts — the gifts of the Holy Spirit, neglected, cast aside ; means of grace slighted, opportunities unemployed, Communion without fruit, prayers not attended to !

O fall down before thy LORD GOD, and beseech Him to give thee a little more time, that thou mayest make more use of His inestimable gifts : use more diligence in searching out where thy defects lie ; search out what are thy gifts ; and then set to the work, and labour without ceasing in thy LORD's service ; — that when He comes and asks an account of thy stewardship, thou mayest be enabled to render up some talent which has been increased tenfold.

LORD, of myself I am nothing — I can do nothing ; but Thy power is sufficient for me : O grant me such grace, such perseverance, such faith, such love, such obedience, that, though the very least and lowest of Thy servants, I may yet be allowed to retain my place, if only in the lowest room.

Friday

AFTER NINTH SUNDAY.

ARISE AND EAT ; BECAUSE THE JOURNEY IS TOO GREAT
FOR THEE. — 1 Kings, xix. 7.

PREVENT me, O LORD, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help ; that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy Holy Name ; and finally by Thy mercy obtain eternal life ; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

Elijah the prophet was obliged to flee for his life from the threats of the wicked Jezebel ; he went a day's journey in the wilderness, and then sat down exhausted and dispirited : he begged of the LORD to take away his life, for, although he was a prophet, he could not bear up against his misfortunes better than those who had gone before him.

But Elijah was beloved of the LORD, and the LORD careth for His servants; He caused a gentle sleep to steal over the wearied senses of the exhausted man, and He sent an angel to set food before him. Elijah ate and drank, and his soul was satisfied: he laid him down again; and again the angel roused him, commanding him to eat, and reminding him of the length of the journey which he was about to undertake, and for which his strength was, humanly speaking, inadequate. He ate and drank, and he went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

How does this history bring before me my own pilgrimage on earth! That world, in which each soul wanders in loneliness and solitude, is the wilderness in which I am advanced a day's journey. I am often perplexed and wearied by cares, not knowing exactly where my duty lies: I am harassed by the claims which press upon me: I am grieved as I watch my own course—how slowly I advance, how often I fall back; how some sins are appearing again in spite of often repeated efforts to overcome them; how sickness and sorrow come upon me; and how

dryness and hardness of spirit make me fear for my salvation. I sink down, worn out by my sorrows and struggles, and exclaim, "It is enough ; now, O LORD, take away my life.

Faint not, thou weary soul ; behold, the angel of the LORD points out to thee a table spread in the wilderness ; approach and see ; that bread which is set thereon is the Bread of Life which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. This Bread is the Flesh of Him Who came down from heaven to take upon Him our nature ; He travelled the same road in this our wilderness, and He laid down His life that we might be saved. He had compassion on our infirmities, and He left this testament in His blessed Body and Blood, that we might be perfectly united unto Him, and receive strength to follow on to the end of our pilgrimage ; until at length, in the strength imparted by Him, we arrive at Horeb the mount of the LORD ; where with angels and archangels and all the blessed company of heaven, we shall praise our LORD, our God and Saviour, unto all eternity.

But, my soul, as the angel touched Elijah, awoke him out of sleep, and commanded that

he should eat again ; so be thou very careful, after partaking of the blessed Communion of the Body and Blood of thy LORD, not to go to sleep in fancied possession of the strength which once partaking of the heavenly food will not give thee : thou must go on receiving fresh strength, or thou wilt never reach the mount of the LORD, nor be fit to encounter all the perils and doubts which in this world are sure to come upon thee.

Thou must present thyself as often as the table of the LORD is spread, and there lay open thy sorrows before thy compassionate Saviour. Shew Him all thy griefs ; beseech Him to come unto thee to heal thee, to strengthen thee ; and though thou art unworthy that He should come under thy roof, yet beseech His infinite compassion to make thee less unworthy to impart Himself to thee—to give thee His Flesh, which is meat indeed, and His Blood, which is drink indeed.

Saturday

AFTER NINTH SUNDAY.

WHAT DOEST THOU HERE, ELIJAH?

1 Kings, xix. 13.

PREVENT me, O LORD, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help; that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy Holy Name; and finally by Thy mercy obtain eternal life, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. *Amen.*

This awakening question is one that I may well put to myself: What doest thou here? Has the still small voice of the LORD aroused me? or have I not been listening to His warnings? I expected to hear the Voice of the LORD in an awful and terrible manner, if I was running on in an evil course; but as I neither heard the wind, nor felt the earthquake, nor

saw the fire, I fancied myself safe : but no, the still small voice of the LORD whispereth to me, What doest thou here?

Gracious LORD, how merciful art Thou in Thy dealings with Thy most unworthy servant ! Thou, out of Whose mouth goeth a consuming fire, by Whose word I might be annihilated and brought to nothing, art ever ready to recall me to my duty by the still small voice of conscience, which, if I quench not the spirit of grace which Thou hast implanted in me, will be my truest, surest monitor.

What do I here ? Alas ! alas ! nothing well — nothing as I ought. I am walking on, engrossed by the pursuits of the world, occupied in my family, turned aside by pleasure, by anxiety to gain the good opinions of others. I am shrinking from my most painful duties by avoiding them, and making plausible excuses for substituting other and less pressing duties ; I go into solitude to avoid meeting those whom I fear to encounter ; but I am not doing my duty. No ; I am acting cowardly, and must retrace my steps, face every peril, encounter every enemy, endued with much strength from the LORD. I must not leave my

direct avocation in this world undone, on any pretext; but by cultivating the grace of recollection, and by doing every thing as under the immediate eye of the LORD, I must sanctify every word and work; never falling away, never going to sleep, for the still small voice will not always sound in my ear if I go on sinning and repenting, and I may not always hear the words of the LORD to recall me to myself.

My soul, if thou art awakened by this question of thy LORD, "What doest thou here?" consider what thou oughtest to be doing here. Thou art called by God, elected by His free unmerited grace in the sacrament of Baptism; thou art a child of God by adoption. How oughtest thou to walk, in order to be worthy of so high a calling? Surely, instead of standing all the day idle, thou shouldest work with all thy might, in order to obtain the prize of that high calling in CHRIST JESUS. Thou feelest thyself weak and insufficient for the work; but thou wilt be made strong by faith in JESUS. If thou hast but faith to stand under His Cross, to be sprinkled with His most precious blood, to be purified by His gracious intercession, enlightened by His grace,—then thou wilt be

strong and very courageous to go on working, and satisfied not to see the fruits of thy efforts, in full faith that the day will come when the fruits will appear. Do thy diligence to perform the LORD's will in all things, and then will He impute to thee the merits of His dearly beloved Son, through Whom thou wilt be able to do all things.


Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

NO MAN CAN SAY THAT JESUS IS THE LORD, BUT BY THE
HOLY GHOST. — 1 Cor. xii. 3.

O HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

When I first read this text, it seems quite impossible that any one calling himself a Christian could deny that JESUS CHRIST is LORD. In a degree, those who have received the gift of the Spirit do confess it; but not necessarily in all its fulness and reality. These few simple words contain a volume of Christian wisdom and knowledge; and they comprehend, when taken in their fulness, all the living principle of the Christian existence.

JESUS is our Lord, but how became He more especially the LORD of the true believer. How



is He emphatically our LORD? By purchase. He bore our nature, took upon Him the burden of our flesh, poured out His life, and purchased us with the price of His most precious Blood. The light of nature would never lead us to believe in the stupendous fact of man's redemption: by grace alone we can believe, and by grace alone apply the belief to the healing of our own infirmities and sins. By the help of the Holy Spirit we see in the blessed Child, laid in the manger at Bethlehem, our God made Man to redeem us: by that same Spirit, we see in His miracles manifestations of God, and types of the miraculous healing, and raising, and feeding of our souls: by the Spirit, we see in the Eucharistic elements His Body broken, His Blood poured out for us: by the Spirit, we see Him raised on the Cross, stretching out His divine arms, as if to gather all His own into His bosom: we beseech Him to nail us with Him to His Cross: we entreat that the pure blood and water flowing from His wounds may wash away all the spots of our souls: and we hear in His last cry, "It is finished," a ratification of that purchase which He made by His Blood and His sufferings. Let us, then,

with St. Thomas, be no longer faithless, but believing; and, after having in devout adoration put forth our finger and touched His hands, and thrust our hands into His side, fall down at His feet, crying, "My LORD and my God."

O my soul, what more could be done for thee than has been wrought in the redemption of thy soul by thy LORD and Saviour; and yet how lukewarm art thou in thy endeavours to purify thyself, so as to be a fitting temple for Him to dwell in. Lift up thyself in continued and earnest supplications for the grace of the Blessed Spirit, to enable thee to realize more fully the blessings of redemption, and to give thee strength to serve more perfectly thy Saviour, thy LORD, and thy God.

Let Thy merciful ears, O LORD, be open to the prayers of Thy humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions make them to ask such things as shall please Thee; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

Monday

AFTER TENTH SUNDAY.

**NOW THERE ARE DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS, BUT THE SAME
SPIRIT. — 1 Cor. xii. 4.**

O HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity ; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

The Holy Spirit of God was imparted to me, and to all true Christians, at Baptism.

On looking round upon all those with whom I am acquainted, or with whom I associate, I see varieties of character and shades of difference, which make mixing in the world not unlike contemplating a motley and varied picture. Among those who are knit together in the fellowship which each feels for other, when the great fact of our spiritual brotherhood is fully realized, I see varieties of tem-

perament and character which are curious and even wonderful. In one, I see the most ardent, high, aspiring, active mind; in another there is meekness, lowliness, and quiet; one is all activity, another is all calm; and yet the one great end and object of all is the same, all adore the same LORD and Father, all hang upon the same Saviour, all are endued with the same Spirit of grace.

I can picture to myself a person whose natural temperament is hasty, rash, overbearing. Some circumstance arouses that person to make active exertions to overcome his natural defect; he prays that the Holy Spirit will assist his endeavours; the contest between nature and grace is fierce and long; the trials necessary to overcome the defect are very great; and yet by degrees grace triumphs. And behold the hot-tempered, hasty, rash person becomes meek and calm, considerate for others, distrustful of himself. Here grace has triumphed; here the gift of the Spirit has been used with blessed effect. The same effect will be traced in the operation of the Spirit upon an indolent, self-indulgent, easy tempered person, who may be stirred up to make exertions,

and may become active, zealous, self-denying, and pains-taking. These are some few of the ordinary changes wrought in men by the gift of the Spirit. There are extraordinary gifts, as of prophecy, discerning of spirits, working of miracles, and the like. Seeing then that there are such diversities of gifts, let me be very careful in judging of the conduct of my fellow members in the Body of CHRIST; and let me so highly prize the inestimable gifts of the Spirit, as to be thankful if I am but possessed of the last and lowest of them. We are all workers together with Him, our great Head. Let me always be thanking Him for His unspeakable gift, earnestly desiring to know the more excellent way, but working in the sphere allotted to me, using the gift which is my portion, and giving God thanks if He do but permit me to use it to His glory.

O LORD my GOD, give me Thy grace to enable me to despise and cast away from me all the desires and lusts of the flesh; and to cultivate those inestimable gifts of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness,

meekness, temperance, that I may walk in the Spirit henceforth for ever, and continue entirely devoted and given up to Thee, of Whose only gift it cometh that I can do Thee any true and laudable service. *Amen.*

Tuesday

AFTER TENTH SUNDAY.

**AND WHEN HE WAS COME NEAR, HE BEHELD THE CITY,
AND WEPT OVER IT. — St. Luke, xix. 41.**

O HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

Our Blessed Lord is journeying, surrounded by His disciples and the enthusiastic multitude, from Bethany towards Jerusalem. He stops at the top of Mount Olivet, and contemplates the city, sitting in all the pomp and pride of its palaces and its Temple, in the bosom of the surrounding hills. He gazes upon the lovely prospect before Him, — the swelling hills adorned with the olive and the palm; the bold rocks jutting out, and seeming to bid defiance to any hostile invaders who should

dare to approach the fair city, which glitters and sparkles in the sun, like a lovely jewel set in a strong and iron-bound casket.

There she stood, the city of the great King, to whom messengers of peace had been sent, but she rejected them; upon whom the LORD had showered down the choicest of His bounties, and she heeded them not; to whom He sent His Son, and she knew Him not! Our Blessed LORD wept over her, for He saw that she was a fair place, the joy of the whole earth; but He saw beyond the present time, when she would be guilty of blood,—of the Blood of her Saviour, Who now so lovingly wept over her; and He saw the time approaching when she would be encompassed with foes, and after a desperate struggle would be levelled with the ground. The LORD longed for Jerusalem, He had a favour unto her; but she would not turn unto Him; and He, our God, wept over her in His infinite compassion and infinite prescience.

The LORD weeping over His own city, the habitation of His own peculiar people, presents an affecting picture to thee, O my soul; for it indicates that He weeps over all His own who

are given up to wickedness, who cast out their LORD and Saviour. Thou art His own child by adoption; thou hast been made a holy temple to His service; thy LORD would come unto thee, He loves thee; but He regards thy present careless state, He foresees thy future bitter punishment. His omniscience knows that thy spiritual enemies will cast a trench about thee, and will leave no trace of thy spiritual life, if they once prevail against thee.

Resolve, then, O my soul, to cultivate such a carefulness about the one thing needful, that not only thy enemies will be unable to make any inroad upon thee, but that thou wilt not cause that poignant grief to thy beloved Saviour, which those occasion who crucify Him afresh and put Him to open shame.

Wednesday

AFTER TENTH SUNDAY.

AND HE TAUGHT DAILY IN THE TEMPLE.

St. Luke, xix. 47.

O HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

If I required any inducement to act up to the rules of our Church, this text would certainly furnish it. JESUS, our blessed LORD and Saviour, is in all things a perfect model, in that being perfect Man He was obedient in all things to His Father's will. He taught daily in the Temple; and it was to those who were there daily assembled that He addressed His instructions. To the Jews this was no irksome duty imposed by the strictness of one of their priests; it was a part of their regular daily

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work: and who would omit such a duty, if the great fact were realized, as the Jews did realize it, of the constant presence of God in the Most Holy place of their Temple? We have no longer their sacrifices to offer. Our Sacrifice is one, full, perfect, and sufficient; the rich fumes of material incense are no longer wafted towards heaven, but our prayers are, in the presence of the Most High, set forth instead. Our Sacrifice has been once, and once for all, offered upon the Cross, but we may join to it the sacrifice of ourselves, souls and bodies: but, inasmuch as our sins are ever before us, God has given power and commandment to His ministers to declare and pronounce to His people (being penitent) the absolution and remission of their sins. How is it possible for me to consider all this and to neglect daily attendance in the temple of the Lord, such opportunity of attendance being one of my present blessings? It is a blessed and glorious privilege to enter the sanctuary, and to lay aside for a short space the cares of the world. How strengthened and braced do I feel for my work, after that short half hour of communing with God! Can I call it a waste of time? O

may I never be guilty of such a profane thought. It is ever a gain of time to me ; as I come forth with renewed vigour, the promise of forgiveness ringing in my ear ; the blessed consciousness ever upon me that Jesus was there.

My soul, remember that as Jesus taught daily in the Temple, still does He continue to teach those who, in humble, simple faith, frequent His courts, and take pleasure in raising their voices with those of the Church in the daily sacrifice of prayer and praise. Thou canst not see Jesus ; but canst thou doubt the presence of thy loving Saviour, Who, after having shed tears of pity over thy coming desolation, has cast out the world and the world's traffic from thee, and then vouchsafes to teach thee daily?

O How amiable are Thy dwellings : Thou LORD of hosts !

My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the LORD : my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young : even thy altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.

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Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house :
they will be alway praising Thee.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in
Thee ; in whose heart are Thy ways.

Who going through the vale of misery use
it for a well : and the pools are filled with
water.

They will go from strength to strength : and
unto the God of gods appeareth every one of
them in Sion.

O LORD GOD of hosts, hear my prayer :
hearken, O GOD of Jacob.

Behold, O GOD our defender : and look upon
the face of Thine Anointed.

For one day in Thy courts : is better than a
thousand.

I had rather be a door-keeper in the house
of my GOD : than to dwell in the tents of un-
godliness.

For the LORD GOD is a light and defence :
the LORD will give grace and worship, and no
good thing shall He withhold from them that
live a godly life.

O LORD GOD of hosts : blessed is the man
that putteth his trust in Thee.

Thursday

AFTER TENTH SUNDAY.

SEEST THOU HOW AHAB HUMBLETH HIMSELF BEFORE ME?
BECAUSE HE HUMBLETH HIMSELF BEFORE ME, I
WILL NOT BRING THE EVIL IN HIS DAYS.
1 Kings xxi. 29.

O HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

Ahab was entirely given up to work wickedness; he had "sold himself" to the wicked one; and was entirely unable to shake off the bonds and fetters of sin in which he was closely confined. This dreadful state of wilful and utter depravity was not the effect of ignorance of God; but was a blindness and hardness of heart brought upon himself, in spite of the warnings of the prophet Elijah — in spite of the miracles

worked to shew forth the power of God — in spite of the chastenings dealt out by the Almighty hand for the punishment of the wicked king and his depraved people. Ahab had sold himself: God was not in all his thoughts; the fear of God was not before his eyes; he despised the light, he hated every good thing.

The crowning iniquity, in the matter of Naboth and his vineyard, brought down upon the head of the unhappy king the vengeance of the LORD. The word of the LORD came to Elijah, and he was sent to denounce a fearful judgment upon Ahab and upon all his house. Then Ahab felt the hand of the LORD; the head of the mighty king cowered and bowed down before the stern dignity of the Prophet of God; his heart quailed as he heard the doom — the curse of all his race; and he humbled himself, he put on sackcloth, and fasted, and went softly. This penitence moved the long-suffering and compassionate LORD God to delay the sentence: and He deferred the evil from the days of Ahab until his son's days.

My soul, in this dreadful history, learn to

dread the power which the world with all its pomps and vanities, the flesh with its allurements and deceits, and the devil with all his snares and temptations, may acquire over thee. Of these our great dangers Jezebel is the type, and thou seest what dreadful results arise from following such temptations, instead of resisting them. To be sold to work wickedness : dreadful, horrible thought ! The Prophet came to Ahab ; but to thee, O my soul, God has spoken by His dear Son, our blessed Saviour, Who shed His precious Blood that thou shouldest not perish. Beware, therefore, O my soul, lest, with greater privileges, higher promises, than Ahab, thou fall into greater condemnation. If thou sell thyself to work wickedness, yea, even if thou give not thyself entirely to Him Who has purchased thee with His own most precious Blood, that Blood will cry out against thee ; thou wilt crucify to thyself the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.

Grant, O God, that I may never come into this condemnation. O keep me, gracious Saviour, to Thyself, and let me so carry about with me the remembrance of all Thou hast

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me and suffered for me, that I may abhor the
ry garments spotted with the flesh, and keep-
g myself close to Thee, may avoid all manner
offence, and cheerfully accomplish those
ings that Thou wouldest have done.



Friday

AFTER TENTH SUNDAY.

BUT I HATE HIM ; FOR HE DOTHT NOT PROPHECY GOOD
CONCERNING ME, BUT EVIL.
1 Kings, xxii. 8.

O HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity ; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

The kings of Israel and Judah are consulting together concerning the war against the Syrians. Ahab, with all the restlessness of an unquiet conscience, gathered together all the prophets that could be met with : he knew that all was not right with him ; he feared with a guilty fear the consequences of a false step ; and he gathered encouragement from the four hundred men whom he had assembled together to advise him. But Jehoshaphat, King of

Judah, of whom it is said, that he turned not away from doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD, was not satisfied with these prophets; but made an enquiry, "whether there were not a prophet of the LORD besides, that we may enquire of him?" Then Ahab admitted there was one, Micaiah, of whom enquiry might be made; but he added, "I hate him," not because he was wicked, but because he did not prophesy good concerning him.

I may here remark the extreme danger of the great, and of all persons, more or less, in listening to flatterers. In Ahab's case it was the withholding the only food which could make his conscience easy, which made Micaiah odious to him.

The Prophet boldly denounced judgment against the wretch who had sold himself to work wickedness, and his reward was hatred.

Let me consider whether, in my humble sphere, I may not be in danger of falling into the beginning of sin, in which we find Ahab so deeply immersed. Flattery is a dangerous thing, a despicable thing; and yet how many people like it; how many even practise it, without the least intention of doing so. Let me be

very much on my guard in this respect ; let me always distrust myself if, after associating with any one, I feel satisfied and pleased with myself ; there has been in that intercourse flattery, unintentional — it may be, utterly unknown, on the part of my friend. But I must seek to know myself, examine my conscience thoroughly, and banish all self-satisfaction by the view of my many and grievous imperfections and failings.

But when a faithful minister, or a true friend, who sees my faults and my weaknesses, and who does not seek to leave me well satisfied with myself, does not speak good concerning me, and does not conceal his disapprobation of my plans of action, do I, like Ahab, hate him? O my soul, answer not this question too hastily ; thou rememberest thy uneasy feelings under rebuke ; thou art not entirely free from the sin of Ahab : humble thyself before God on this account ; and as this lurking desire for the good word of others may be one of thy “ secret faults,” from which thou prayest to be preserved, watch thyself in this respect, and pray to thy Heavenly Father to keep thee also from presumptuous sins.

Saturday

AFTER TENTH SUNDAY.

AND SAY, THUS SAITH THE KING, PUT THIS FELLOW IN THE PRISON, AND FEED HIM WITH BREAD OF AFFLICTION AND WITH WATER OF AFFLICTION, UNTIL I COME IN PEACE. — 1 Kings, xxii. 27.

O HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity ; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

Micaiah stands before the king ; he is adjured by Ahab to say nothing but that which is true in the Name of the LORD.

He prophesies, but not smooth things. He pictures the army of Israel, without its leader, scattered to and fro, as sheep without a shepherd ; therein furnishing an illustration which, in after times, our Good Shepherd made use of. He shews that the LORD had put a lying spirit

into the mouths of the prophets, to deceive the king ; and he tells the king boldly of the LORD's anger.

Zedekiah smites him on the cheek : what associations does that blow raise up within me ! The smiting of Micaiah's cheek, standing before his earthly king, brings before me the image of One, Whose sacred cheek was given to the smiters, while, standing before His earthly judge, He was bruised for our iniquities,—and we esteemed Him smitten, stricken of God, and afflicted.

Micaiah's dignified answer to Zedekiah filled the wicked king with rage. He could get no smooth prophecy from Micaiah ; he ordered him away to prison, and commanded his keepers to treat him with the utmost rigour until his return in peace. In peace, O Ahab ? Truly there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked ; and so he found when he commanded his charioteer to drive him out of the battle, being sorely wounded.

In all this, Micaiah was blameless ; he suffered in the LORD's cause, and in the end he was justified. How different would it have been, if, bowing before the authority of Ahab, he

had lied unto him, as all the other prophets had done? But he, strong in the LORD and in the power of His might, faithfully did the LORD's business; and, no doubt, his light affliction worked for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

My soul, be thou strong and of a good courage, and do as thy God would have thee do; be not afraid if all men speak ill of thee. If the rich, or the powerful, or even thy dearest friend require of thee that which, for the LORD's sake, thou must withhold, thou canst by no means go beyond what the LORD commands thee. Therefore be content to suffer for a while, and in due time thou wilt have thy reward; perhaps not in this world, but certainly in the kingdom of Him Who hath said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake.

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

St. Barnabas.

AND JOSES, WHO BY THE APOSTLES WAS SURNAMED BARNABAS, (WHICH IS, BEING INTERPRETED, THE SON OF CONSOLATION,) HAVING LAND, SOLD IT, AND BROUGHT THE MONEY, AND LAID IT AT THE APOSTLES' FEET.—Acts, iv. 36, 37.

FOR ever blessed be the grace and consolation of our LORD, Who so eminently honoured this His disciple, by making him an instrument in the foundation of many glorious Churches, that not excepted wherein the name of Christian first began.

O LORD GOD Almighty, Who hast built Thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles, under CHRIST the Head Corner Stone; and didst for this endue Thy holy apostle Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost; leave me not destitute, I humbly beseech Thee, of Thy manifold gifts and talents, nor of the grace to make a right use of them; through Thy Son JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

The Church, in commemorating the lives of the Saints, shews the different ways in which faith operated in men of different stations in life and different characters.

What a touching name is given to this saint; The son of consolation! His faith manifested itself in the desire he shewed to apply the healing balm of the Cross to the several kinds of affliction. What a sublime and holy character! I can see the devoted man shewing to the sick in body, the wounds of their Saviour; to the sick in mind, His agony in Gethsemane; to the poor he spoke of Him Who had no place to lay His head; to the captive he shewed the cords of His bitter bondage; to the dying he held up the Cross, on which, once for all, hung the Ransom, which rescued us all from the valley of the shadow of death; to the rich, Barnabas himself gave the example,—he was rich himself, but he sold all, and left the money to the disposal of others.

My soul, art thou ready to go about consoling the afflicted? Thou sayest, "But I have no possessions, I can sell nothing to give to them that lack." Herein lurks thy pride, O my soul; thou thinkest if thou hadst possessions thou

wouldst willingly give all. Why dost thou not give now what thou hast? True, it will not show like silver and gold; still it is what thou hast. Why canst thou not give a kind look to that suffering man? a smile might cheer the little heart of that sick infant, more than all the gold of the mines: a word in season may check a life of sin: an encouraging sentence may strengthen the weak-hearted. Think not that money will stand in the place of sympathy, but give to others of those gifts which God has bestowed upon thee, and leave to those on whom Providence has bestowed riches, the care of dispensing according to their gifts.

Baranabas himself gave not; he laid all at the Apostles' feet. Imitate this example, O my soul: if at any time thou hast wherewithal to relieve the wants of others, place it in the hands of God's appointed ministers. So doing thou wilt perhaps mortify vanity, and exercise self-denial, but thou wilt have followed the example of the son of consolation.

My song shall be of mercy and judgment:
unto Thee, O LORD, will I sing.

O let me have understanding: in the way of
godliness.

When wilt Thou come unto me : I will walk in my house with a perfect heart.

I will take no wicked thing in hand ; I hate the sins of unfaithfulness : there shall no such cleave unto me.

A froward heart shall depart from me : I will not know a wicked person.

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour : him will I destroy.

Whoso hath also a proud look and high stomach : I will not suffer him.

Mine eyes look upon such as are faithful in the land : that they may dwell with me.

Whoso leadeth a godly life : he shall be my servant.

There shall no deceitful person dwell in my house : he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

I shall soon destroy all the ungodly that are in the land : that I may root out all wicked doers from the city of the Lord.

St. John the Baptist.


AND HE SENT, AND BEHEADED JOHN IN THE PRISON.

St. Matthew, xiv. 10.

GRANT, O GOD, that I may improve myself by meditating upon, and endeavouring to imitate, the life of this great saint ; that I may learn of him those excellent lessons of humility, mortification, self-denial, zeal, and courage, which we may gather from his history : grant it, I beseech Thee, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake.

Constantly to speak the truth, boldly to rebuke vice, and patiently to suffer for CHRIST'S sake ; these are the virtues which the Church points out for special imitation, in considering the life of John the Baptist.

What a wonderful history is that of the messenger sent before the face of our LORD, to prepare His way before Him ! Consider the prophecies, so precise that they cannot be for a




moment mistaken; the description of that preaching of the doctrine of repentance, which afterwards came to pass;—and, when the time was come, the appearance of the heavenly messenger to Zacharias; the wonderful announcement of that angel; the punishment of disbelief in Zacharias; the opening of his mouth when all was fulfilled; the retirement of the sacred child into the wilderness; his coming forth, bursting out before the multitudes with his astonishing cry, “Prepare ye the way of the LORD!” his successful preaching, turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; his boldly rebuking the wickedness of Herod; his being cast into prison; and then, falling a victim to the bad passions of a licentious woman and the weakness of an unprincipled man, being beheaded in prison. Here is a history of the life of one of God’s saints; one sent on earth for a particular purpose! here is no ease, no quiet, no luxury, no flattery of friends; nothing but hard living, hard labour, and a hard death. What an encouragement is this to the weary and heavy-laden! they may well find that their troubles need give them no doubt of their God’s love and mercy, any more

than we can doubt of His love and entire approval of St. John the Baptist.

A hard task may some day be set me: to speak the truth may one day be as great a trial of my faith as it must have been to John's disciples to see him cast into prison: to rebuke sin, especially among the great, and powerful, and rich, may possibly fall to my lot; and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake may be my portion. Patiently? let me consider whether it will be patiently. If I have to suffer, I may be sure that the reality will be as different from my anticipations as is possible.


It is glorious to think of suffering for truth's sake! But should the truth be everywhere spoken against; should I be counted an idiot; should the rich, the powerful, the great, be all against me; should I be cast into a lonely prison, without even the sympathy of others, without food to sustain me; and after languishing in a dungeon, should I be deprived of life without opportunity of defending myself; without a word passing from the lips of the cruel executioners, that I died in full faith and blessed hope! — may I hope to have faith patiently to suffer under such circumstances?



Can I look on this prospect, and not feel love and admiration for the character of St. John the Baptist; and still more love and gratitude to God, Who giveth such large measures of grace to His chosen servants, and gives to us such bright examples and such great encouragements?

O my soul, take heed that thou repent according to the preaching of this great saint. The kingdom of heaven is at hand: all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of our God endureth for ever! Repent, therefore, O my soul: take great courage, and speak the truth constantly, that all men may know thee to be a servant of the LORD JESUS: boldly rebuke vice; and if thou art counted worthy to suffer, even in the meanest, lowest way, do so patiently, for the sake of that truth for which John the Baptist prepared the way.

Almighty God, by Whose providence Thy servant John the Baptist was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the way of Thy Son our Saviour, by preaching of repentance; make us



so to follow his doctrine and holy life, that we may truly repent according to his preaching; and, after his example, constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*

St. Peter.

AND SIMON PETER ANSWERED AND SAID, THOU
ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING
GOD.— St. Matthew, xvi. 16.

O LORD, grant, I beseech Thee, that, by meditating on the example set by this Apostle, I may gather strength and courage to be ready to confess Thee before men, to suffer for Thy sake, and, if Thou wilt, to die for Thee; through CHRIST our LORD.

How thankful ought I to be to God for bringing, as it were, His saints, one by one, before me, to enable me to contemplate in them the different qualities which each has perfected in himself. This contemplation does not cause me to stop in admiration of the holy men themselves, though in their strength there is very much for my weakness to admire and endeavour to imitate; but I am carried upward

from man to God, from the creature to the Creator, Who brings such great things to pass for His glory, and Who out of weakness brings forth strength. St. Peter, at first a simple fisherman casting his net in the sea of Galilee, is called by our blessed LORD, and becomes a fisher of men. He is bold; he is ardent; he loves his LORD with all the fervour of a generous nature; and he seems to be fully impressed with our LORD's divinity; he confesses that He is the Son of God,—and this confession our blessed LORD declares to be the revelation of God to him. Peter was present at the Transfiguration of our LORD, at that blessed time when heaven came down to earth, and when a voice was heard from the excellent glory: "This is My beloved Son." He saw His glory; he was also witness of His deep humiliation, of His bitter agony in the garden. Peter had said, "Though I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee." Alas! Peter was among those who forsook Him and fled. Peter denied our blessed LORD, and his own dear Master: "Man, I know not what thou sayest; and immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew, and the

Lord turned and looked on Peter." O gracious Saviour, Thy gentle reproving look brought Thy erring disciple back to his faith. He had fancied himself strong; he might have strengthened himself against the direct attacks of bitter persecution; but ridicule and sarcasm he could not stand. That blessed look brought Peter's better self to his aid; he remembered his God; he thought on all his Saviour was to him; he saw his own faithlessness, and he went out and wept bitterly.

This is thy lesson, O my soul. Thou thinkest thyself strong in thy faith; thou art determined no power shall separate thee from thy Saviour; thou art willing to go through persecutions for His sake. Thy trial may not come in that way; some time, when thou least expectest, "when thou art standing over the fire warming thyself," a sarcastic word, a scornful look, a bitter jest, may throw thee off thy guard. Oh, if such be the case, may thy gracious Saviour turn and look round upon thee; may He at once cast the beams of His blessed countenance into thy soul; and mayest thou share St. Peter's tears, as thou hast shared his sin!

But that look has turned the soul of Peter: he is henceforth bold, steady, firm, mild,— and with unflinching courage ever after stands he forth to declare, that JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, the Stone rejected of the builders, is become the Head of the corner.

Thou art permitted, O my soul, to see how God's holy ones go on from strength to strength: set up for thyself the highest standard of perfection; aim at it, be ever striving to reach it. Thy constant endeavours will lift thee above the mire and filth of thy sins; and by the assistance of His Holy Spirit, thou mayest hope for the attainment of some of those virtues which distinguish the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, and the noble army of Martyrs.

LORD JESUS, my blessed Saviour, turn on me Thy gracious looks to correct me when in error; to encourage me in virtue; to lead me on to glory. O grant me a clear spiritual perception of Thy constant presence with me; of Thy watchful care of me; and make me to love Thee as did Thy blessed apostle Peter: to confess Thee as manfully as he did; and if Thou so

willest it, to die for Thee: but if Thou willest otherwise, let me take indifference, scorn, and contempt, as the cross on which Thou wilt have me suffer for Thy dear sake. *Amen.*

St. James.

ARE YE ABLE TO DRINK OF THE CUP THAT I SHALL DRINK
OF, AND TO BE BAPTIZED WITH THE BAPTISM
THAT I AM BAPTIZED WITH?
St. Matt. xx. 22.

GRANT me, I beseech Thee, O LORD, at the call of Thy grace, the same readiness as Thy apostle St. James to quit all my worldly affections and engagements, and to apply myself wholly to become a worthy disciple of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, One God, world without end.

St. James the son of Zebedee, the elder brother of St. John the apostle, was one of those disciples to whom our LORD was pleased to shew a more particular favour and love : he was one of the three chosen to be witnesses of the glory of the Transfiguration ; one of the three admit-

ted to be present at the raising to life of the daughter of Jairus ; one of the three whom He took along with Him, to stay and watch with Him in His prayer and agony in the garden.

How great must have been the faith and love of St. James, that he should have been so chosen and favoured by JESUS. How happy may they consider themselves, who, like St. James, stay close to JESUS, partaking of His sorrows, of His sufferings, and, it may be, admitted also to His glories !

St. James had the glorious privilege of being the first among the apostles who laid down his life for the love of his Master, and sealed his doctrine with his blood. O glorious death, to die for love — not of mortal honour or earthly glory, but for the love of our most loving LORD, Who is the true everlasting life. How happy are those sufferings that are endured for the love of CHRIST !

My soul, art thou able to drink of this cup, and to be baptized with this baptism? Pause, and recollect thyself ; imagine thy Saviour asking thee this question. He knows, as He knew when the mother of James and John asked for honour and distinction for her sons,—He knows

the sorrows and the labours and the sufferings which thou must endure, if thou unite thyself with Him; but the reward He declares not,—it is unspeakable: but He wills that those who follow Him be His for His sake alone, and not for the sake of any glories or distinctions that may be given. In fact, the reward is Himself: if we walk close to JESUS, we walk in peace; the world may frown, but JESUS smiles; we may be called upon to shed our blood for His sake, but the Cross, and the Blood there shed, and tortures endured, have taken the sting from all future pangs; JESUS was there, and He will be with me, even if I am baptized with His own baptism of blood.

Oh how true it is that we know not what we ask, when we would have riches, or honours, or pleasures! we know not, even when we ask to follow JESUS, what may be included in it, for that petition may bring us to the fearful baptism of blood; still it is the only baptism that I may prefer. LORD, let me drink of Thy cup, even of the bitter cup of Thy Passion; let me take up my cross, and follow Thee; let this bring me, in Thy own good time, to Thy kingdom, there to sit down, and live with Thee eternally.

My soul, resolve to keep close to thy LORD; ask not to see thy way; work, suffer, love as He wills. Be diligent, but seek for nothing of distinction — for no power; for nothing but JESUS, JESUS only. Then sit down in deep humility; take the lowest place: it may be thou wilt be called up higher; but in the meantime endeavour to drink of that blessed cup which thy Saviour holds out to thee, in steadfast faith and loving hope that He will one day give thee a mansion, if only the last and lowest, in His glorious kingdom.

End of Part III.

